DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 121 223 HE 007 725

TITLE The Dynamics of Field Instruction: Learning Through Doing.
INSTITUTION Council on Social Work Education, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 106p.
AVAILABLE FROM Council on Social Work Education, 345 E. 46th St. New York, New York 10017 ($3.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Community Service Programs; Educational Innovation; *Field Experience Programs; *Higher Education; *Instructional Design; Instructional Staff; Interdisciplinary Approach; *Learning Experience; School Social Workers; Seminars; *Social Work; Students; Teaching Methods; Teaching Models; Team Teaching; Training

ABSTRACT

Both students and faculty in social work education find field instruction to be both rewarding and puzzling. Unquestionably, much of the genius of social work education has been an intermingling of conceptual and experiential learning. These eleven papers cover experiences in a variety of graduate and undergraduate social work field settings. It examines in detail students in a rural setting, students in a field research project, students in generic field instruction program, students in a community-based practicum, and students in a psychiatric setting. Two seminars are treated--the practice seminar and an interdisciplinary team training seminar. One paper details the development of a field instruction model for social administration and another examines a student-designed practicum. The role strain of both agency-based and school-based field instructors is another subject touched upon. (Author/KE)

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The Dynamics of Field Instruction: Learning Through Doing

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Council on Social Work Education
New York

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Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 75-8365
Printed in the United States of America.

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Council on Social Work Education, 345 E. 46th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10017

Foreword

Both students and faculty in social work education find field instruction to be at once uniquely rewarding and educationally puzzling. Unquestionably, much of the genius of social work education has been, through the years, an intermingling of conceptual and experiential learning. Other professional disciplines have looked to social work as a model in the use of the practicum. Happily, social work educators have never been content with an existing structural arrangement or current level of integration. Workshops and seminars on field instruction are invariably well-attended, articles are avidly read, and informal discussion on field instruction takes place wherever social workers gather.

This volume includes eleven papers that cover experiences in a variety of graduate and undergraduate social work field settings. It examines in detail students in a rural setting, students in a field research project, students in a generic field instruction program, students in a community-based practicum, and students in a psychiatric setting. Two types of seminars are treated – the practice seminar and an interdisciplinary team training seminar. One paper details the development of a field instruction model for social administration, and another examines a student-designed practicum. The role strain of both agency- and school-based field instructors is another subject touched upon.

This volume makes a needed contribution to the literature on field instruction in social work education. It represents the continued striving on the part of the Council on Social Work Education to provide the field with meaningful and useful information that will help guide educators, researchers, practitioners, and students in their efforts to make social work and social work education increasingly relevant and effective.

RICHARD LODGE
Executive Director

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A Specialized Role Function Approach to Field Instruction in Social Administration

by Donald Carroll & Patrick McCuan

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents an analytic description of the development of a specialized role function model for field instruction in social administration.[1] Historical and sociopolitical factors have influenced the emergence of social administration field instruction; such factors are relevant to the conceptual formulation that defines a specialized role function approach to the professional education of social administrators. One model is discussed in the context of the educational forum and recent developments in the field of social welfare. The conclusion presents a rationale for rejection of the generalist administration approach and makes recommendations for equipping graduate social work students with the prerequisite skills in four specialized social administration roles.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

During the 1960s the field of social welfare experienced significant growth and change, including the development of new mechanisms for the delivery of social services as well as the ex-

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[1] Appreciation is expressed to our colleagues in the social administration concentration for their contributions to this work: Professor William Bechill, former chairman, Professor Paul Kerschner, and Professor Frank Dearden. We also express special appreciation to the Maryland Department of Employment and Social Services for their encouragement and support of our program.

This paper was originally presented at the 19th Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education held in San Francisco, February 25-28, 1973.

Donald Carroll is an assistant professor and chairman of the social administration concentration at the University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work and Community Planning. Patrick McCuan is senior consultant at the Human Services Institute for Children and Families, Washington, D.C.

pansion of traditional systems for providing services to people. Legislation was passed that included the Community Mental Health Centers Act, the Model Cities Act (Demonstration), and the Older Americans Act (OAA). The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) were created. Correspondingly, massive and rapid changes in political policy related to accountability in public social services curtailed the functioning of many agencies. These developments have created profound changes in both the social welfare structure and social work practice.

The changes have extended beyond the boundaries of public agencies into the basic structure of private and voluntary agencies. This has resulted in the alternation of public-voluntary agency relationships in virtually every community. A major consequence has been an increasing demand for professionally trained social workers who are qualified to assume a variety of new roles in the operation and management of the emerging systems.

Traditionally, social work has not been required to provide specialty-trained personnel to manage the various social service systems. Agency administrative leadership was, and for the most part continues to be, selected from among the most experienced workers who were recognized for their methodological skills. However, the accelerated trend toward large-scale public welfare organizations has created a demand for new specializations in social administration practice. Ideally, this demand should be predicated on two assumptions: first, that social welfare functions and services are largely conducted within an organizational context that includes both the internal and external systems; and second, that those entrusted with administrative responsibilities within social welfare organizations should have an identity founded in social work practice and the field of social welfare, as well as a strong service orientation.

As a result, social welfare organizations are required to employ an increasingly wide variety of professional skill and technology. Specialized skill and knowledge are required in order to meet responsibilities to clients, the community, and society as a whole.

The beginning of the 1970s brought new developments in the organizational patterns of social services. Demands for greater political accountability for social welfare expenditures as well as outcomes have created new sources of institutional anxiety in public, private, and voluntary service systems, which has led to a deterioration in the quality of their services. Accountability demands have affected, in particular, public welfare agencies where competing political forces utilize the "workfare" mania as a political football. Private and voluntary agencies have felt the crunch as government has begun to "dry up" funds on which they have come to rely.

Those in the social welfare system are not adequately prepared to provide the answers requested by those in the legislative arena, because current accountability mechanisms have not attained a high degree of accuracy. They also have failed to move effectively in providing the type of information necessary to justify the expansion, or, in some cases, the continued existence of their programs.

The multiple factors that operate in today's society demand that administrators be more than good managers; they must be prepared to cope with the forces in the external environment including the immediate needs of clients and consumers. In addition, they must possess the skill to adapt the agency structure and program so that it will be both effective and responsive to the needs of people.

Social work education has begun to respond to these societal demands. However, there is an immediate need for comprehensive curriculum development in the specialized training for social administration. This training must be separate and unique from clinical social work practice and social planning (community organization). It must do more than require all students to enroll in one administration course. It must do more than train social administrators in the apprenticeship model. Rather, social administrators should be trained in specialized role functions so that they will be able to assume a major role in the administration of social agencies immediately upon graduation.

THE SPECIALIZED ROLE FUNCTION APPROACH

We have recognized these historical trends and future directions in social welfare and have therefore rejected past approaches that were either inefficient or ineffective. We have replaced them with a model for field instruction in social administration that is designed to meet emerging expectations for those agencies seeking to employ administrators in the social service delivery system.

In building a model for field instruction in social administration, the first step is to define "administration" and then grapple with the implications of the definition. Based on a cursory examination of existing field instruction models, it appears that the operational definition of administration is closely linked to those methods, processes, and activities utilized or engaged in by executive personnel in social service organizations. This has often led to a model of field instruction that placed the student as an administrative assistant or executive's apprentice.[2]

We acknowledge that substantial arguments could be developed supporting the efficacy of this approach but doubt that there can be much argument confirming its effectiveness. Based on the authors' practice experience and analysis of limited data in this area, this approach seems analogous to the traditional social work education practice of training proportionally large numbers of clinical practitioners who are not utilized in clinical practice roles upon graduation.

Analysis of data contained in a study of membership in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) indicated that almost 50 percent reported their primary job function as administrative.[3] In a University of Michigan study of graduates in social welfare administration 92 percent were engaged in administrative roles, while only 15 percent were in executive roles one to five years after graduation.[4] Both of these studies support the establishment of specialized concentrations in social administration. However, the Michigan study offers little support for the development of field instruction based on the executive's apprentice-administrative assistant role model.

In rejecting traditional models of field instruction in social administration, one is forced to supply a substitute. A closer scrutiny of the University of Michigan study shows that the majority of respondents reported occupying jobs that could be described as middle-management positions requiring generic and highly specialized administrative skill.[5]

Therefore it is imperative that social work education develop a model of field instruction in social administration that is a specialized role function approach to field instruction in social administration. This approach allows a school to develop a program that requires a student to develop the analytical, interactional, and technical skills identified by Neugeboren in the context of an intensive role-function-related field experience that focuses on the practice demonstration of a technical skill.[6] Another important feature of this model is that it allows schools (even those with small student bodies) to develop programs in social administration on an incremental basis in relation to existing faculty resources and capabilities. Accessability to certain organizational systems that would be closed to student placement utilizing traditional models is facilitated, and student units can be utilized more readily.

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[2] The authors do not know to what extent these were arrangements of choice or necessity.

[3] Alfred M. Stamm, "N.A.S.W. Membership: Characteristics, Deployment, and Salaries," *Personnel Information*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (May 1969), p. 39.

[4] R.C. Sarri and John Riley, "Graduates of the Social Welfare Administration Curriculum: Where They Are and How They View the Curriculum," mimeographed, University of Michigan, 1969, p. 9.

[5] *Ibid.* Fifteen percent in supervision, 22 percent in specialist positions (includes specialist in program development and analysis and staff development specialist), and 22 percent in program management positions. Recognition is given to the fact that definitions of middle-management positions in this context vary in relation to organizational size.

It should be pointed out that by advocating such a model the authors do not recommend any diminution of responsibility that schools of social work have in preparing students for positions of executive leadership in the profession. Rather, our approach retains this as one goal while attempting to provide students with the technical and specialized skills required for the immediate demands of social administration practice.

FOUR ROLE MODELS DEFINED

Four identifiable and specialized middle-management role functions are supervision, staff development and training, program development and analysis, and program management. Supervision, and staff development and training have been clearly identified historically as components of social work education; program development and analysis, and program management are rarely identified as methods. A brief description of student assignments in the specialized role function approach follows.[7]

Supervision

The supervision model was predicated on the conviction that students can be given significant assignments and responsibility for supervision of program staff. The thrust of the educational direction was toward the administrative aspects of supervision. This allowed the student to shift from the primary clinical social work model to the role of an effective manager.

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[6] Bernard Neugeboren, "Developing Specialized Programs in Social Work Administration in the Master's Degree Program: Field Practice Component," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall 1971), p. 39.

[7] Length limitations prohibit a full explication of these specialized role function models in this article, necessitating an explanation that operationalization occurs in an intensive second-year practice experience of three days per week built on a first-year class and field experience of a general administrative nature. These role functions may appear to be similar to traditional assignments; however, these are not the overview of, or practice of one component of, but long-term (one full semester of three days, often two semesters) intensive experiences in all facets of the specialization.

During the initial year of operation, one second-year student was assigned the role of acting deputy manager of a decentralized service unit. Her major responsibility was to provide supervision to four continuing service workers. She was under the direct supervision of the district manager who provided close consultation during the early stages. However, within five weeks the student was providing full supervision to the four workers with little assistance from the manager.

During the second year of operation the supervisory tasks were expanded. One second-year student was assigned as supervisor of the intermediate care department. Four caseworkers were placed under his supervision. Since this was a newly mandated program he also had responsibility for total program development, including program direction, policy, guidelines, job descriptions, work loads, and record system. He was given complete authority literally to run the program.

The success of these experiments was so positive that the agency agreed to move one step further. A first-year student was assigned as a supervisor during the second semester. Although the results of this development are still inconclusive, there is every indication that this will provide further basis for the premise that supervision of program staff by graduate students is a valid task assignment for both the student and the agency.

Staff Development and Training

The staff development and training role model was designed to provide an educational experience that develops practice skills in all phases of this area. Placement agencies were limited to those with organizationally identifiable units responsible for staff development and training functions. Students specializing in the role function were given assignments that involved them in the development of job standards, identification of learning needs, determination of learning objectives, curriculum development, selection of methods and materials, securing instructional resources, conducting training sessions, and evaluation of training outcomes.[8] One student placed in a large city public welfare agency was responsible for the development of job specifications and a training program in community organization. A student placed in the Career Development and Training Division of the Social Security Administration was assigned to design and carry out an evaluation of the administration's Supervisory Development Training Program.

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[8] Donald J. Carroll, Patrick McCuan, and Frank Dearden, "Social Administration Field Instruction Curriculum: Units III and IV Specialized, Staff Development and Training," mimeographed, University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work and Community Planning, 1973, p. 2.

Program Development and Analysis

A role model was designed to provide practice experience in program development and analysis that involved the student in a broad range of practice tasks. For instance, students might be given an assignment to help reduce the number of older people who have been placed inappropriately in nursing homes. They would participate on an interagency basis in the development of new or alternative services or living arrangements that would be more suited to the needs of these older people. In addition, they would help develop specific criteria and procedures for the evaluation of existing services to ascertain whether they were in line with agency goals and whether they were effective.

One student was assigned to a large city public welfare department to help develop a program that provided protective services to adults. This involved analysis of federal, state, and city legislation; development of philosophy; development of operation procedures and communication; and development of control and evaluation program operations. A second student was assigned to a similar setting to develop an instrument that would measure the extent to which the agency was meeting the needs of its clients, and then to test the instrument on a demonstration basis prior to thorough agency-wide application. A third student was assigned the task of developing a grant proposal to design a foster care for the aged program at a public welfare agency.

A final example was a project completed by three second-year students assigned to a public welfare setting. They were organized into a consulting team and produced a work and motivation study that was utilized by the agency for major policy realignment.[9]

Program Management

The program management role model is specifically designed to prepare students for positions of overall administration of a particular program unit or division responsible for program implementation and the direct provision of social and related services. In essence, this can be a line position such as a deputy or assistant director of an agency or a more specialized function such as director of research operations. As an example, a student shared responsibility for scheduling and monitoring overall agency responsibilities, participated in decision making, made recommendations for aid in executive decision making, took responsibility for handling emergency items requiring immediate attention, and developed overall work control and other accountability measures. One student assigned to a large public welfare agency was given responsibility for management of a state-mandated reconsideration project involving identification of goals and objectives, deploying and supervising staff, assigning work, setting priorities and time limits, periodic reviewing, and overall evaluation of ongoing performance of these specific tasks.

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[9] Patrick McCuan, with Patricia Larmoyeux, Mary Carey, and Carolyn Stayer, "The Concept of 'Work and Job Satisfaction' in Baltimore County Department of Social Services: An Administrative Study of Secretarial/Clerical Managerial and Social Work Personnel," mimeographed, Towson, Maryland, 1972.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Description of student assignments is an inadequate means of evaluating student learning as well as an inadequate measure of the extent to which learning objectives are achieved. Yet limited attempts at program evaluation have been made. The following highlights of one such evaluative effort indicate the perceptions of students and agency personnel involved in the program.[10] Of the 61 percent of agency personnel responding to this evaluation instrument prior to publication (the instrument contained a possible 520 responses), 97 percent responded favorably to our total program. The agency response indicated a 75 percent willingness and hired the students for employment in the role models in which they had been trained.

Student responses to a student-designed evaluative instrument returned by 100 percent of the sample indicated a very positive reaction (90.2 percent favorable of which 66.3 percent were highly favorable) to the learning experience provided in the program.[11] The evaluation of the importance of student response is directly related to the extent to which we value the student's evaluation of his own learning needs. Ongoing and much more rigorous evaluation is a priority for the immediate future, but these beginning efforts have provided a source of some optimism about outcomes of the program.

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[10] Donald J. Carroll, "Three Party Evaluation of Social Administration Field Instruction," mimeographed, University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work and Community Planning, 1972.

[11] Barbara Beach, Henry Carter, Grace Clark, and David Cramer, "Student Evaluation of Social Administration Field Instruction," mimeographed, University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work and Community Planning, 1972.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented a rationale for the development of a model for field instruction in social administration based on a specialized role function approach. Sociopolitical factors that have influenced the dynamic changes and growth in the social welfare system in the past decade were viewed as creating a need for administrative personnel equipped with specialized knowledge and skill based in social work values. Traditional approaches to field training in social administration were viewed as ineffective in that they did not prepare the majority of students for the immediate demands of practice. Four specialized role function models—supervision, staff development and training, program development and analysis, and program management—were briefly described, as were a sample of student field assignments.

Over a three-year period the authors have been engaged in the conceptual development of a specialized role function approach to field instruction in social administration. This has included the development of a complete field instruction curriculum, operationalization of an initial second-year experimental program, and a finalized two-year concentration. Together with other faculty, students, and placement agencies, they have begun to evaluate the educational and other outcomes of this approach. Based on these experiences, the authors view this approach as viable and realistic in preparing students to perform key administrative roles in the social welfare system of the 1970s.

Supervising the Undergraduate in a Psychiatric Setting

by Betty Guthrie Dawson

INTRODUCTION

The profession of social work has evolved a new and different challenge – the need to educate the bachelor-level social worker for professional functioning within the context of his four-year college experience. The newness of this concept has brought about much speculation and planning within academia. New job opportunities are becoming available for the bachelor-degree worker, and the clarification of the level of functioning and the need to conceptualize his appropriate role in the broad area of social welfare services is crucial.

In discussing this challenge to the social work profession, Gerald L. Euster points out that:

> Their functioning has expanded to a point where often they are capable of assuming job responsibilities formerly considered as "professional." The future utilization of non-MSW personnel depends upon the ability of social work educators and leaders to develop educational and training programs for these new personnel that will facilitate their integration into the field.[1]

The need for practice experience in social work to be combined with the academic aspects is apparent. Undergraduate programs are looking to the established community agencies to help them with this, in the form of supervised field education placements.

PURPOSE OF FIELD EDUCATION

The incorporation of field education into the undergraduate experience has many educational and functional advantages. First

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[1] Gerald L. Euster, "The Job Market for Undergraduate Social Work Majors: Implications for Social Work Education," *Social Work Education Reporter*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (April-May 1973), p. 40.

Betty Guthrie Dawson is a psychiatric social work supervisor at the Tennessee Psychiatric Hospital and Institute, Memphis, Tennessee.

it offers a structured, protected environment or laboratory in which the student can "try his wings"; where he can adapt theory he has learned to the realities of client-problem situations, test his own skills, integrate them, discard them, or at least be made aware of their limits. The field education setting enhances the possibility of having a successful initial exposure because the student is given quality support by the university, the agency, and the supervisor.

The experience offers one or more role models in professional functioning – thus the student begins to mold his professional image. He sorts those behaviors he observes in terms of their usefulness to his own style of operation. It is at this point that this writer raises a question regarding the practice of assigning undergraduate students to agencies under the supervision of non-social workers. The rationale sometimes given is that the students will often find themselves in agency jobs without a social worker for a supervisor – where they might be the only social worker employed. If this is the case, then it is all the more important that a firm concept of professional social work be acquired during their field experience.

Forming a professional image through teaching is very difficult. How can *performance* be graded? On what criterion does one rate the quality of caring expressed through individual skills and methods? It is here that the uniqueness of field education comes into play. It is an avenue through which the sum total of the personality's potential for the social work profession can be discovered, experimented with, consolidated, and integrated. Hopefully, a nubbin of the "professional self" will emerge.

More practically from the university's standpoint, field education serves as a screening device, since there are many undergraduate students who can perform intellectually but who cannot handle the realities of job pressures, client systems, relationship involvements, and the disciplined use of self as part of an overall social work approach.

THE SETTING

Although the observations in this paper relate primarily to the supervision of undergraduate students in a psychiatric setting, I feel that there can be much carry-over to other types of student settings. These impressions were formulated through field education placements in a modern 175-bed psychiatric hospital located in a metropolitan area where the community's social service support systems were readily available. The hospital program offered a multiplicity of patient care programs including day care (partial hospitalization), adolescent service, night care, alcohol and drug unit, crisis intervention, outpatient, and general inpatient units. Although the student was assigned to one primary area, he was eventually exposed to all of them.

STUDENT PROFILE

In supervision one of the things that must be avoided is stereotyping the students coming to the agency. However, for the purpose of this paper it might be helpful to draw a profile of these students in order to clarify the remainder of the paper and to give a unified mental image from which to proceed. The typical student is twenty-one years old, single, and a senior in the educational sequence. He has held one or two part-time jobs of various types, and usually not social work-related. He comes to the agency without any concept of what a social work practictioner is, has not formed a concept of the "self" as an economic producer of a product or service, may not have a clear awareness of responsibility or accountability to job-related elements of the field placement, and is not aware of the agency's service limitations. He may not yet have completely integrated his view of himself as an "adult."

However he does bring very important qualities: an unsurpassed desire to learn, an enthusiasm to become involved with the totality of his experience, and an accessability to supervision seldom found in the regular employee – all unmistakable ingredients for a good field education experience.

THE PROCESS

Already implied is that the experience of the undergraduate in the agency setting is a process – meaning that the experience can be classified theoretically, in typical Perlman fashion, into phases; namely, beginning, intermediate, and termination.[2] It is helpful to look at field education from this perspective because it allows the supervisor, the student, and the university to accurately assess the potential that the student brings to the agency, any growth while at the agency, and the point of development at the end of the field experience. Furthermore, this schema can be used by the university to aid in decisions about whether or not a particular student should be encouraged to pursue a graduate education, what type of agency would be appropriate for additional field experience, and whether or not a student should reconsider his involvement in the social work field.

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[2] Helen Harris Perlman, *Social Casework* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

THE LEARNING SEQUENCE

Beginning Phase

At the beginning of his field experience in the agency, the student worker will be given a complete tour of the facilities in order to gain an overview of the various departments, their locations and services, and how they relate to each other. He also should become acquainted with the personnel with whom he will be working, the medical library, and available resource materials.

The student should gain the initial confidence necessary to move about on the psychiatric unit with freedom, relating easily with patients and staff. He should learn to use patient charts, departmental resources, and available references to gain insight into the patient's total life situation.

Intermediate Phase

Observations are designed to give the student examples of how procedures and processes are carried out by experienced workers. He should have the opportunity to raise questions and discuss techniques that he has observed; for example, admissions procedures, intake interviews, and so on. After several observations he will conduct social history interviews by himself, which will be followed by supervisory discussion that will help him recognize the strengths and weaknesses of his technique.

The student should become familiar with preparing social histories for the patient's medical record, and begin to learn what interview materials should be included in the written record. He should learn the use of the dictation system and clerical procedures. He should also form a beginning concept of the importance of charting patient contacts, and learn what behavior should be recorded.

The student should have the opportunity to observe and participate in the initial interviewing process conducted by an experienced worker. He should become acquainted with the staffing and decision-making process regarding whether or not an applicant will be admitted to one of the treatment modalities, referred to another agency, or not accepted. He should learn to make referrals to other hospitals. In addition he should begin to develop a working knowledge of community agencies to which the patient can be referred upon discharge for follow-up services.

The student should develop an understanding of each patient's home situation, the patient-family interactional patterns, and be familiar with treatment plans in order to be able to discuss the patient's progress with his family. In addition he must learn to preserve the patient's confidentiality and to distinguish which information can be shared. He should learn how and when to send medical information to schools, employers, insurance companies, and so on, and to secure information releases.

The student should develop with the field education supervisor a relationship conducive to a free exchange of questions and ideas and begin to use supervision for his own growth and self-awareness and skill development. He should also gain a thorough knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the various professions represented on the staff. Above all, he should understand the team approach to patient care.

Termination Phase

The termination phase should be used by the student primarily to gain experience, self-confidence, and proficiency in intermediate phase learning. In addition, he should develop skill in the following areas:

1 • *Intake Interviewing.* If the student has shown proficiency in diagnostic interviewing and a sufficient degree of knowledge in psychopathology, he should assume responsibility for the intake-interviewing of applicants.

2 • *Court Commitment Proceedings.* The student should have the opportunity to observe first hand the court commitment proceedings, and to gain an understanding of the legal implications for the patient and his family.

3 • *Community Resources.* In order to further expedite patient referrals to appropriate community agencies, the student should develop in-depth knowledge of selected agencies, their services, eligibility requirements, and application processes, and develop professional relationships with key personnel in these agencies.

4 • *Psychotrophic Drugs.* The student should gain a working knowledge of the most-used psychotrophic drugs, and understand their benefits and hazards.

5 • *Interviewing Skills.* The student should progress to a client-centered focus in interviewing, and be able to consciously use *some* casework techniques with proficiency.

6 • *Treatment Modalities.* The student should be exposed to, and have the opportunity to familiarize himself with various psychiatric treatment modalities used in the agency, including chemotherapy, electroshock therapy, individual psychotherapy, group therapy, family therapy, and behavioral therapy. This can be done through selective readings, observations, and participation.

7 • *Supervision.* In supervision the student should assume greater responsibility for schedule-planning, seek new experiences, and go beyond minimal assignments. He should be able to discuss openly positives and negatives in the field education experience, establish appropriately independent functioning, and develop the ability to discern the social worker's role in a given situation.

It is apparent that this sequence of learning must be approached in a flexible manner, allowing for the individual differences of each student. In keeping with this, it is not expected that all students will have reached and mastered Phase 3 learning by the end of their first semester field assignment. However, if a student remains for a second semester he should be able to attain most of the attributes and skills indicated. This statement is not intended to be all-inclusive of the learning potentials available in the agency, but to serve as a framework from which student and supervisor can work.

In acquainting the student with this schema there are several approaches that can be used: it can be presented in written form to the student at the onset of his field experience to give an overview of the learning expectations; it can be presented in writing phase-by-phase, which may tend to ease anxiety; or it can be a framework for verbal evaluation as the supervisor deems appropriate.

ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

The first function of a supervisor of undergraduate social work students is to determine for each student the learning model on which he is to build his field practice. This is a responsibility that the supervisor must assume based on the school's goals, the agency's expectations, the types of patient situations encountered, and the student's needs.

Two models seem to surface in the psychiatric setting: the *case* approach and the *task* approach. There are advantages and disadvantages to both methods in their day-to-day application. The case approach is good for teaching continuity of services – intake screening, treatment planning, applied therapy techniques, discharge, and follow-up care. The student can easily understand the totality of the patient's life situation with this approach.

Certain disadvantages to this method are inherent in the psychiatric setting when one works within the student's time limitations. As he is likely to be in the agency only ten to twelve hours a week, and this in varying blocks of time, he is often not able to deal with the patient's problems, since they sometimes arise while he is away from the agency. Thus it falls to another social worker to fill in, which makes continuity of case-approach learning difficult.

For these reasons this writer prefers the task model as the primary learning mode. The task approach teaches the student the skill of partialization and focused service-rendering. The rapid turnover of clientele in the psychiatric setting also favors this method. It gives exposure to a wide variety of needed services and opportunity for similar experiences to be repeated until a particular skill can be learned and integrated. As the student matures in his functioning he may be able to use both models simultaneously.

The second function of the field education supervisor is to conceptualize the growth processes that the student goes through during his field experience. For example, in the psychiatric setting it is not uncommon for a student to experience initial uneasiness around the mentally dysfunctional. He often is not able to deal with this at a conscious level in the beginning. Perhaps it arouses his own anxieties as he observes persons who are in some ways very much like himself, and has to deal with the ambivalence of health and dysfunction existing in the same personality. Supervisory support is essential during this phase.

Generally the student will progress through a three-step continuum from the beginning to the termination of his two semesters in the field placement setting. In the beginning he is *self-centered* in his approach. He spends a good deal of emotional energy gaining homeostasis in the agency, forming relationships with the supervisor and staff, struggling with the expectations of the experience, and exploring his own motivations. This phase is essential as he gains confidence in his environment and associations. Naomi Brill expresses this adjustment in the form of "basic questions" that must be dealt with by the person first learning to be a helper:

1 • How do I think and feel about myself?
2 • How do I deal with my fundamental needs?
3 • What is my value system, and how does it define my behavior and my relationship with other people?
4 • How do I relate to the society in which I live and work?
5 • What is my life style?
6 • What is my basic philosophy?[3]

The next growth phase might be termed *problem/technique-centered.* Here the student is intellectually aware of social work skill techniques he is learning in the classroom and is dealing with their application to the patient's problems. Supervision may take the form of analyzing case records and interviews and discussing areas of strengths and weaknesses, treatment goals, use of referrals, and so on. Toward the middle of this phase and through the termination phase the supervisor may determine that the student has progressed to what can be called a *client-centered* or *patient-centered* mode of functioning. Here he is comfortable with himself in his environment and has confidence in the use of some skills. With these integrated into his emerging professional image he can proceed to an understanding of the patient's total life situation – he can get out of himself and into the other. In this phase supervision can move into the abstract areas of basic human needs – acceptance, enabling, values, and so on.

In supervision many tools can be used to achieve learning goals. Among them might be selected readings assigned to the student to supplement, correct, or develop knowledge or skills in a specific area. In some cases it is beneficial to preview an anticipated experience through role-playing. Often a written outline of what to look for in an experience can be useful, such as the following for analyzing an intake interview.

1 • Interpretation of agency purposes and services to client.
2 • Presenting problems (objective facts and subjective significance).
3 • Tentative assessment of client.
4 • Aspects of the beginning relationship.
5 • Client participation.
6 • Worker participation.

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[3] Naomi I. Brill, *Working with People: The Helping Process* (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1973), pp. 1-18.

Group observations can be enhanced in a similar manner through an adaptation of this outline by Whitaker and Lieberman.

1 • Period of unofficial talk.
    a. General atmosphere.
    b. Relationship patterns.
    c. Beginning patterns.
2 • Group leadership.
3 • Communications.
    a. Verbal.
    b. Nonverbal.
4 • *Participation patterns.*
5 • Group cohesiveness.
6 • Role of the therapist.
    a. Authoritarian.
    b. Democratic.
    c. Laissez-faire.
7 • Techniques used.
    a. Support.
    b. Confrontation.
    c. Interpretation.[4]

Perhaps the most useful supervision tool is that of the *supervisory conference*, when two people regularly assess student progress. It is the ready availability of supervision which is the catalyst that has the potential for turning an everyday happening in the agency into learning for the student. Reciprocity of the supervisory relationship is the key to accomplishing this goal.

EVALUATIONS

The evaluations of the student in field placement required by academia pose a problem for many agency field instructors. Students, because of the four-year exposure to the college grading system, become very concerned about the letter grade assigned to their "performance." On the other hand the supervisor is probably more concerned about meeting agency performance expectations than assigning a letter grade. Suffice it to say that the letter grade should be mutually agreed upon by the school, the supervisor, and the student if at all possible, with all three entering into the evaluation process.

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[4] Dorothy Stock Whitaker and Morton A. Lieberman, *Psychotherapy Through the Group Process* (New York: Atherton Press, 1964), pp. 14-37.

The school of social welfare has the primary responsibility for establishing overall guidelines for field education; the agency submits to the school an explanation of the learning opportunities available; and the student brings an expectation of what he hopes to gain from field practice. The criteria for evaluating field education come from the interaction of these factors.

Perhaps the most frequently used methods of evaluation are the oral examination, the written summary-type form, the check-list form, or any combination of these. An evaluation should be *comprehensive*, in order to convey the student experience as completely as possible, and *precise*, in order to eliminate vagueness in terms of student functioning. It should also reflect *individuality* in the student's growth achievement and skill level.

CONCLUSION

Supervision of the undergraduate student in field education is at worst a waste of time, at best a growth experience for both student and supervisor. Only time will testify as to its value for the field of social services, as students graduate from the undergraduate sequence and assume positions in agencies, where the quality of their learning will be revealed in their performance.

Field Instruction for Undergraduate Social Work Education in Rural Areas

by Cornell R. DeJong

Do social workers who practice in rural settings need special skills and knowledge not required for practice in urban settings? This question confronted me when given the task of establishing a field instruction program for Northern Michigan University in the Upper Peninsula. Another concern was to overcome a lack of community resources in a sparsely settled area with rugged terrain and inclement weather.

Social work in rural settings is virtually ignored in current social work literature, a fact that stands in contrast to the numerous schools with Council on Social Work Education approved undergraduate programs located in predominately rural areas.[1] This paper deals with the implications of rural practice for social work education – primarily field instruction. It is hoped that schools will weigh carefully the alternatives available for designing education to meet the needs of rural social work practice.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

At the mention of rural poverty, stereotypes of Appalachian coal miners and southern sharecroppers readily come to mind. However, rural poverty and related problems are not unique to any one area of the United States, nor are they of minor importance. Although 70 percent of Americans now reside in cities, a full 40

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[1] See *Colleges and Universities with Undergraduate Programs in Social Work* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, July 1971); and *Standards for Approval of Undergraduate Programs in Social Work* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1971).

This paper was originally presented at the 19th Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education held in San Francisco, February 25-28, 1973.

Cornell R. DeJong is an assistant professor in the Northern Michigan University Social Service Program.

percent of the total poverty population exists in the small towns and sparsely settled areas of the country.[2]

In describing the plight of rural America, Leon H. Ginsberg identifies as major problems the depopulation of rural areas, the dehumanization of minority groups, substandard housing, and inequalities in the application of the law and delivery of social services.[3] The most unique problem is depopulation, the rural counterpart of urban crowding. LeRoy G. Schultz points out that population reduction raises the per person cost of fixed government expenses, which in turn hampers the development of needed services.[4]

Analysis of migration reveals that the people who leave rural areas typically are the young and the skilled.[5] This results in a rural population composed of the most dependent and immobile members – including the elderly, the poor, and the hard-core unemployed. Speaking of rural areas in general, Schultz points out the futility of investment in education, health services, child welfare, and social services because the young leave as soon as they reach maturity. Since they realize so little return on such investments, communities are reluctant to develop needed services.[6]

The problems are further exacerbated by the current reliance on grant projects to fund necessary services. Such a process assumes the existence of skills in proposal writing and fund raising that frequently are not available in rural areas.

The design of existing state organizations creates additional problems for rural communities. In Michigan, the population is heavily concentrated in the southern third of the state; thus services are also clustered there. The net effect on rural people requiring help from these agencies can be devastating. Travel expenses, ignorance of resources, and distrust of state bureaucracy are only a few factors inhibiting use of service. Also, although state agencies are charged with a mandate to serve the entire state, it is doubtful that isolated rural communities are encouraged to utilize them fully.

Minority group issues also are affected by the rural setting.

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[2] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960).

[3] Leon H. Ginsberg, "Social Problems in Rural America," *Social Work Practice, 1969: Selected Papers, 96th Annual Forum on Social Welfare* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

[4] LeRoy G. Schultz, "Criminal Justice in Rural America," *Social Casework*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (March 1970), p. 151.

[5] J. Allen Beegle and Rodger Rice, "Some Demographic Characteristics of Rural Youth," in *Rural Youth in Crisis: Facts, Myths, and Social Change*, prepared for the National Committee for Children and Youth by Lee G. Burchinal (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 6.

[6] Schultz, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

Ginsberg contends that controls on discrimination are weaker in rural settings than in urban settings due to the inability of civil rights groups to effectively monitor the many rural communities and to organize the residents.[7] There are also different kinds of minority problems that require special knowledge and expertise. America is only beginning to recognize the discrimination faced by American Indians. Based on long experience with government programs that did more harm than good, overtures of helping services from social work agencies are met with suspicion and misgivings. But efforts in social work education to improve this situation do not appear widespread. A survey of undergraduate social work education programs revealed that only two American Indian faculty were listed by the schools surveyed.[8]

Some authors have suggested that the social structure, family rearing patterns, and norms of a rural area require special knowledge and techniques for service delivery.[9] The need for workers to function as generalists skilled in many areas such as casework, groupwork, community organization, social action, consultation, program planning, and administration has been stressed for rural social service.[10] My own observations of social workers in the Upper Peninsula confirm this. Recent graduates of our program have been expected to perform a combination of functions including the development of program proposals, service to individual clients, coordination of volunteers, and the administration of agencies including supervision of other employees.

Others familiar with rural social work have indicated a need for social workers who are able to adapt to local patterns, and through self-direction, to assess and modify their performance.[11] Although it is basic to all professional social work, self-directed practice is especially required in the rural setting. In urban areas where agencies are large, where ACSW supervision is available, and where frequent contact with fellow professionals occurs, the educational program is only one of many vehicles of professional growth readily accessible. In contrast, the rural practitioner must actively pursue his own growth and development without the ready encouragement of supervisors and colleagues.

Rural social work directly influences the structure and content that realistically can be utilized in field instruction. Schools in rural areas seldom have either a sufficient number or range of agencies within close proximity. Small agency size, lack of work space, and large service territories make field instruction duties difficult for many organizations to accept.

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[7] Ginsberg, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

[8] Frank Loewenberg, ed., *1970 Statistics on Social Work Education* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1971).

[9] Roman B. Aguizap and Ernest A. Vargus, "Technology, Power, and Socialization in Appalachia," *Social Casework*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (March 1970), pp. 131-139.

[10] See Patricia M. Keith, "A Family Service Agency in an Appalachian Community," *Social Casework*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (March 1970), pp. 140-145.

[11] See Leon H. Ginsberg, "Rural Social Work," Editorial Notes, *Social Casework*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (March 1970), pp. 167-169.

For example, the one social worker of the Lutheran Social Service Agency in Marquette has the entire Upper Peninsula as a service territory. This district is 200 miles long and 300 miles wide. This makes it impossible for the social worker to be available on a regular schedule as is required for traditional field instruction. Simply scheduling and finding transportation become important considerations under these conditions. Even climactic conditions are important, for they limit the practical range of placement territory. In the Upper Peninsula an annual snow accumulation of several feet severely hampers commutation between school and agency. Public transportation is nonexistent so the students must find their own means of travel.

Faced with these conditions, what course can the undergraduate program follow in order to provide effective field instruction within the rural area? Fortunately the alternatives are many; the social work literature identifies numerous innovations in field instruction. The school serving a rural population should consider the following alternatives.

FIELD INSTRUCTION ALTERNATIVES

New developments in field instruction diverge significantly from the traditional mode of field learning, which has the following characteristics:

1. It is focused on practice skill development in one method of practice.
2. Placement is scheduled concurrently with class learning and utilizes early introduction to client service responsibilities.
3. Placement is based in a single agency.
4. Learning experiences are planned according to agency function and caseload needs.
5. The primary teaching method is role identification with the field instructor, and a tutorial approach.
6. There is a high reliance on the work role of employee for the student.[12]

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[12] Mark P. Hale, "Innovations in Field Learning and Teaching," in *Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education,* ed. Betty Lacy Jones (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1969), pp. 21-30.

Mark P. Hale indicates that in revising this model, some programs have focussed on the curriculum and learning needs of the student instead of on the cases served by the agency. A wider range of learning experiences is also evident. Group teaching, use of multiple instructors, and joint learning with students from other disciplines have all changed the reliance upon one teaching method. Various learning principles and a diverse range of practice theories are utilized.[13]

The concept of a "progression through levels of learning experiences" affects certain programs.[14] Thus the student is not immediately confronted with full case responsibilities. Instead, he is led through experiences of increasing involvement that often start with simulations, informal contacts, or observation of another worker and gradually build up to full case involvement. Finally, organizational changes have expanded the range of settings now utilized for field instruction, including the following:

1 • A single agency is used when instruction, practice, and social services are administered through the auspices of that agency.
2 • Subsidiary or satellite placements are utilized that offer extra learning experiences beyond those available in one agency.
3 • A teaching center is used when the school is directly involved in the administration of practice.
4 • A service center is developed by the school to provide both social services and education under the auspices of the school.[15]

Determining the particular focus of field instruction, the range of learning experiences, the conceptualization of teaching-learning, the theory of practice to be relied upon, and the organizational structure are all essential to making field instruction successful. Although many schools neglect this,[16] there are examples in the social work literature that demonstrate the benefits of molding these factors into a consistent program.[17]

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[13] For details, see *ibid.*

[14] For example, see Virginia Rezmierski, "An Approach to the Training of Education Students within a Clinical Setting," *Exceptional Children,* Vol. 36, No. 8 (April 1970), pp. 597-600.

[15] Jones, *op. cit.* pp. xiii-xv.

[16] Kristen Wenzel, ed., *Curriculum Guides for Undergraduate Field Instruction Programs* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1972), p. 2.

[17] *Ibid.;* and Emily McNew and Ann DeYoung, "Field Instruction at Marywood: It's Micro, Macro, and Modular," *Journal of Education for Social Work,* Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1970), pp. 29-40.

One reason more schools do not have clearly defined programs is due to the tendency in social welfare education for each school to attempt to be "all things to all men." Margaret B. Matson suggests that each college begin with its own educational objectives and then explore the contribution of field experience toward achieving those goals. In order to do this, she provides a series of questions concerning the "why" and "how" of developing field instruction. These comprise an excellent framework for field instruction planning.[18]

IMPLICATIONS FOR A RURAL FOCUS

The process of developing an effective, relevant field instruction program with a rural focus is not fundamentally different from the process for developing other programs. However, in following the suggestion of Matson, I believe the characteristics of practice in rural settings and the rural environment itself require that the following be recognized in the placement development process:

1 • Rural practitioners have been described as generalists who require skills to work toward individual, group, community, and organizational change.

2 • Rural social workers often function independently, without supervision from other social workers, and without benefit of frequent peer interaction.

3 • The immediate area of a rural university may contain only a few primary social work agencies, and local resources will seldom be representative of the full range of social services.

4 • The educational level and professional expertise of local social workers may not be adequate for traditional field instructor roles.

5 • Traditional agencies may not be directly involved in unique social problems of the area such as depopulation or services to American Indians, Chicanos, or other minority groups.

6 • Factors such as inclement weather and poor transportation facilities may limit the territory that reasonably can be utilized.

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[18] Margret B. Matson, *Field Experience in Undergraduate Programs in Social Welfare* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1967) p. 13.

Preparing students to function as generalists and develop self-direction while working independently involves basic decisions about program- and field-instruction objectives. It requires the inclusion of learning experiences that will enable the student to utilize social work skills appropriate to different client systems including individuals, groups, communities, and formal organizations.

Similarly, planning field instruction with emphasis on self-directed practice has implications for learning content and for the structure of the learning environment. One approach is to heavily involve the student in the selection of learning goals and in the evaluation of his performance.[19] This enables him to critically evaluate his effectiveness and to sharpen his self-awareness, qualities that are especially needed in the varied roles of social work in rural communities. Also, involving the student in professional social work organizations as part of his field instruction program can serve to establish an interest that he will maintain after graduation.

A lack of varied and well-staffed social service agencies need not automatically restrict learning in rural areas. The key is a clear understanding of what experiences will best meet the objectives of the program.[20] Too often students are placed in an agency where learning depends solely upon what happens during the few hours per week they are present. To alter this and provide "a range of content that reflects the total social work curriculum and not the understanding and mastery of a specific social work method alone," may require that a community base be employed instead of relying on the single agency.[21]

For instance, when the limited learning opportunities of one small agency are combined with relevant experiences available in settings that provide complementary services, the result may be a more complete learning experience for the student. For this reason, one agency site with subsidiary placements makes an excellent choice for rural programs. It also has the advantage of enabling the school to utilize the qualified field instructors who are available, and still provide learning experiences in additional agencies that lack trained social work staff.

A field placement dealing with services to the aged might be set up with the student based in the local office of the depart-

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[19] Frank Maple, "Shared Decision Making: A Systematic Approach to Problem Solving," (Paper delivered at the University of Michigan Field Instructors meeting, April 1971).

[20] *Undergraduate Programs in Social Work: Guidelines to Curriculum Content, Field Instruction, and Organization* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1971), p. 11.

[21] Samuel Finestone, "Selected Features of Professional Field Instruction," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Fall 1967), pp. 14-26.

ment of social services, but also receiving assignments in a nursing home, community center, hospital, and community action program as they relate to problems and services for the elderly. It is readily apparent that clearly established objectives are essential for such an arrangement. The role of each agency in providing segments of the field instruction package must be understood and agreed upon by the school and agency involved. Achieving such a mutual working relationship requires that a faculty representative who is knowledgeable regarding the program objectives work with the agencies to identify available learning experiences and to design a means for clustering these into a meaningful sequence.[22]

CHANGES IN METHOD AND STRUCTURE

The search for a wide range of learning experiences often leads directly to pressures for change in the teaching methods and organizational structure of field instruction. Educating students to meet the demands of work in unestablished practice areas creates challenges in this regard. In the Upper Peninsula there are few social workers involved in direct service to the American Indian population. To fill this gap, tribal councils, the University Coordinator for American Indian Programs, or Indian community action projects might be used as placement sites.

Many fields of practice relatively well-established elsewhere may be viewed as radical by rural communities. School social workers are almost nonexistent in the Upper Peninsula, and medical social workers are primarily administrative personnel. Still, learning opportunities are available if the university can develop social work roles for students in these settings.

The lack of existing social work professionals in rural settings requires that alternative means of instruction be utilized to take advantage of the learning experiences available, while controlling the negative effect of the lack of skilled professionals. Even in traditional agencies many of those employed in social work roles have little formal education in social welfare, and in such cases the school must find ways to upgrade the workers' skills or provide sufficient supportive mechanisms to offset the deficiencies of field supervision. There is precedence for utilizing non-MSWs for field instructors; in fact, some schools are experimenting with the utilization of graduate students in the supervision of undergraduates.[23]

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[22] McNew and DeYoung, *op. cit.*

[23] Ralph Dolgoff and Donald Feldstein, "Developing Undergraduate Field Instruction," *Social Work Education Reporter*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (December – January 1972), pp. 19-22.

Although supervision by graduate students is not feasible for all rural programs, other alternatives to the traditional model of agency worker as tutor and role model are available. The school can make a concerted effort to upgrade the teaching skills of agency representatives.[24] A number of ways to accomplish this are available, including university courses, conferences, more extended liaison between university and agency, or special institutes designed to disseminate new knowledge to field instructors. Even a well-trained, experienced worker is likely in this age of rapidly changing and expanding knowledge to need aid in adjusting to new developments in field instruction content.[25]

When students are placed in settings where agency field instructors are not available, it is equally important to educate key organizational personnel so that they have a clear idea of the social worker role in order that appropriate learning experiences can be identified and made available to the student. To achieve this understanding, educational programs and ongoing liaison activities on the part of the university are crucial if an effective placement experience is to develop.

Rethinking agency personnel roles, using unconventional instruction sites, and including new social work knowledge have led to various structural changes in field instruction including block placements, teaching centers, and university service centers.

ADAPTING TO THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

In considering which options to utilize in developing a rural program, it is wise to look not only at the changes in field instruction, but at the adaptations to the rural environment that other professional programs have made in their search for effective practice training. One excellent model for the program at this university has been the School of Education. Training student teachers presents many of the same problems that educating social workers does, including a lack of sufficient practice opportunities nearby, low professional quality among potential field instructors, and geographic barriers.

The School of Education met these problems by placing groups of student practice teachers in clusters throughout the northern region. Local housing was found and a program of seminars in each community was designed in order to provide intergration of class and field learning, to counteract the isolation, and to provide peer group interaction.

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[24] For example, see Phillip Fellin, Edwin J. Thomas, Clarice Freud, "Institutes on Behavioral Science Knowledge for Field Instructors," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Spring 1968), pp. 5-13.

[25] For example, see Josephine DiPaola, "Helping Field Instructors Retool When a School Changes its Approach to the Teaching of Methods," in Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-175.

The social work program is moving in a similar direction. Block placements were implemented to provide more intensive student involvement in the practice role and to provide more field learning experiences. This enabled the program to utilize agencies throughout the state, increasing the number and type of placements. However, reliance on a senior block placement in an isolated community has inherent limitations in assuring integration of class and field learning, and students stated that they missed the opportunity to discuss their learning with peers. It also placed unrealistic demands on field site agencies to carry out the field instruction program, which resulted in inconsistent supervision, nonuniform course content, and haphazard evaluation of student learning.

Following the example of the School of Education, we found that a feasible plan for our program could be found in the development of field instruction units in several key areas of the Upper Peninsula region. Students in groups of five to eight could be placed with agencies located within reasonable driving distance of each other. Through agency cooperation housing could be arranged. Because students would be concentrated in clusters, a concurrent seminar similar to an extension course in one agency with other students commuting from their placement sites nearby becomes possible.

Students who are involved in practice assignments where interaction with professionally trained social workers is minimal could overcome this problem through the intimate teaching-learning experience of the seminar with faculty, other professionals, and fellow students. Field instructors in these clusters also would be in a position to share educational responsibilities and be involved as a group with the faculty coordinator in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of field instruction.

Although each agency would have primary responsibility for one or two students, all those in the same cluster could provide experiences for other students in the area. For example, a field instructor in one agency might conduct a seminar demonstrating interviewing techniques for all students in the cluster. On-campus meetings that attract local field instructors could be supplemented by off-campus meetings for outlying placements. This would eliminate considerable travel for students and field instructors while delivering a solid learning experience, reducing isolation, and making university field relations more efficient.

It must be stressed that in order to develop such placement clusters or utilize other innovations, the university must be willing to provide sufficient staff and resources for planning, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of field instruction. Travel to the field agencies, hours of meeting time, and long distance telephone communication are only some of the expenses that must be borne in such an undertaking.

Immediate results in terms of credit-hour production will not be high, a fact that will require the university to reevaluate its criteria of faculty work loads. Making arrangements for twenty students to spend a few hours per week in specific agencies is one thing; coordinating interagency cooperation, seminars, and subsidiary placements in order to achieve specific objectives is quite another. These very practical considerations and the need to justify the cost of field instruction to the university administration once more underscore the necessity of having clear social work program objectives and a well-formulated plan for achieving those objectives.

SUMMARY

It is evident that schools seeking to increase the effectiveness of field instruction have a variety of potential options. Whether the school serves a rural community or an urban center, the basic program planning process is the same. Starting with the philosophy and mission of the school, clear objectives for the program should be formulated. Then, based on what reasonably can be taught in the class and in the field, the specific content and structure of field instruction can be planned, implemented, and evaluated.

The school serving a rural population must consider the implications of the rural setting on field instruction and also the special contribution it can make toward meeting student needs for practice in rural communities. Models are available from social work and other training programs that can be tailored to the needs of the rural program. Through creative planning, the inconveniences of rural areas can be reduced and the learning experiences of the students enhanced.

The Faculty Field Instructor in Social Work Education

by Alex Gitterman

Since its professional beginnings, social work has emphasized fieldwork training. Social agencies always assumed responsibility for in-service training of their staff. As bureaucratization of service and treatment knowledge increased, the major responsibility for professional education was transferred to schools of social work.[1]

The schools work with community social agencies in an educational "partnership." A review of the relevant literature suggests that this partnership is seldom achieved and is more of a hope than an accurate structural description. From the agency's perspective, Baker is critical of the schools for failure to share control, a dimension she considers essential in a partnership. She says, "A partnership implies that to some degree each of the partners has an appropriate share in the control of these partnership outcomes. I suggest that agencies are feeling that they have lost their share of the control."[2]

From the school's perspective, Werner Boehm perceives the agency creating obstacles because of the priorities they give to service objectives. He states that "it is difficult for school and

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[1] For an historical perspective, see: Edith Abbot, *Social Welfare and Professional Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931); Nathan Cohen, *Social Work in the American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958); Ernest V. Hollis and Alice L. Taylor, *Social Work Education in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958); Alfred J. Kahn, ed., *Issues in American Social Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); and Helen C. Witmer, *Social Work: An Analysis of an Institution* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942).

[2] Mary R. Baker, "Observations from the Agency Point of View," *Potential and Problems in the Changing School-Agency Relationships in Social Work Education* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1967), pp. 15 & 17.

This paper was originally presented at the 19th Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education held in San Francisco, February 25-28, 1973.

Alex Gitterman is an associate professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work.

agency to translate this objective [partnership] into action because the agency's service orientation . . . sometimes stands in the way. The result has been a widening of the gulf between agency and school."[3]

As a result of these divergent views there has been increasing dissatisfaction by both school and agency with the traditional fieldwork arrangement in which the agency assumes the major responsibility for field instruction. Hollis and Taylor remark that "field teaching is . . . largely done by agency supervisors who have only a nominal connection with a school of social work and whose primary function is to provide services to clients rather than educate another generation of social workers."[4]

In response to these criticisms, schools of social work employed faculty to instruct units of students placed in various agencies[5] who were responsible to them rather than to the social agency. However, the creation of a new status, the faculty field instructor, saw another set of problems develop.[6] Field instructors are caught between conflicting obligations to agency and school, since they occupy statuses in both organizations.[7] Each has a formal, explicit position in his parent organization and a somewhat ambiguous, less explicit one within the host organization.

This paper examines role strain as it is differentially associated with these two statuses – agency- and school-based field instructors.[8] It asks two questions: Do agency field instructors find it easier to develop student assignments than faculty field instructors who occupy an "outsider" position? Are agency field instructors more likely to be satisfied with their parent and host organization than faculty field instructors? Faculty field instructors, occupying an "outsider" position, appear to be particularly susceptible to role strain resulting from discrepant organizational expectations (service and training).[9]

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[3] Werner W. Boehm, *Objectives of the Social Work Curriculum of the Future*, Vol. 1 (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1959), pp. 155-157.

[4] Hollis and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[5] The new pattern of field instruction was in part made possible by the availability of funds for educational innovations.

[6] For a description of some of these problems, see Sidney Berengarten, "Third Presentation," *The Future for Field Instruction: Agency-School Commitment and Communication* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1963), pp. 14-19.

[7] The concept of status, as used in this study, refers to a cluster of norms defining field instructors' expected behaviors.

[8] This paper is taken from a larger study, Alex Gitterman, "The Field Instructor in Social Work Education: A Study of Role Strain" (Doctoral diss., Columbia University, 1972). The study utilizes Goode's definition of role strain: "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations." William J. Goode, "A Theory of Role Strain," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 25 (August 1960), p. 483.

[9] Berengarten, for example, identified the "built-in strains." Sidney Berengarten, "Educational Issues in Field Instruction in Social Work," *Social Service Review*, Vol. 35, (September 1961), p. 250.

Since student assignments are developed primarily within the agency context, it is reasonable to assume that faculty field instructors experience greater role strain than agency field instructors.[10] Similarly, it is assumed that role strain will affect the field instructors satisfaction with their jobs. Consequently, faculty field instructors would be expected to be less satisfied with their host agency and less likely to wish to continue their association than the comparable relationship between agency field instructors and the school.

DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study was secured by a questionnaire sent to all field instructors in one of the largest and oldest schools of social work. The total population consisted of 181 field instructors in 163 social agencies training 443 students. Most of the field instructors, 153, were employed by their agencies. The remaining 28 field instructors were employed by the school and assigned to agencies. Of the total population, 131 agency and 27 faculty field instructors (87 percent) participated in the survey.

FINDINGS

As expected, faculty field instructors experienced significantly greater role strain than their agency counterparts in working with the agency administrator and agency staff.[11] A greater proportion of faculty field instructors (77 percent) than agency field instructors (49 percent) experienced role strain in working with the agency administrator. In addition, faculty field instructors were likely to experience more role strain in working with agency staff than the agency field instructors – 81 percent of the faculty felt role strain as compared to only 46 percent of the agency field instructors. These findings are consistent with the faculty field instructor's less favorable position as compared to the agency field instructor, since the latter is an employee with a formal position in the agency, has extensive instrumental knowledge of its organization, and has greater authority and accessibility to its formal and informal systems.

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[10] Merton associates the degree of clarity in role relationships in role sets with role strain. The greater the ambiguity in expectations and in evaluation of role performance, the greater the role strain. Robert K. Merton, "Analysis of Social Structures" (Lecture delivered at Columbia University, November 21, 1970).

[11] Due to a shortage of space, tables were omitted here.

Successful negotiation for student assignments with agency administration and staff depend upon both the skillful and knowledgeable use of informal, interpersonal relationships, as well as on more formal prescribed relationships. In many cases the informal processes are the "grease" facilitating the operation of the formal agency machinery. The faculty field instructor has little or no access to these informal processes. He is seldom able to accumulate a reservoir of favors upon which to draw when engaged in formal negotiations. He is an "outsider." His status is defined by the school, who negotiates with and imposes upon the agency structure his special status. Although the faculty field instructor may be respected, he is not generally an integral part of the informal system and consequently is less "trusted." These factors create built-in strain for the faculty field instructor and make it difficult for him to carry out his responsibilities.

Thus more faculty field instructors (70 percent) experience difficulty in finding sufficient work assignments for students than do agency field instructors (49 percent).[12]

While the finding is not statistically significant, it points in the anticipated direction. Under normal procedure, cases are not held aside for students, but are redistributed or "picked off" from the case load already assigned to staff, or from new cases. Agency field instructors understand and have knowledge of this situation and enjoy accessibility to both the formal and informal system that helps them to negotiate work for their students. Reports from two field instructors graphically illustrate and support the study findings.

The first, a faculty field instructor in groupwork at a public hospital, described the difficulties:

> The message that gets sent from the agency to faculty field instructors is as follows: "You are an outsider, the third party intruder. We are expert and steeped in the social service program and function. We will direct you to the suitable spots for students to be assigned." At the same time time, the agency expects that the faculty field instructor is also expert. Thus, everyone is afraid to make a move, to get into the specifics of developing assignments. When I was an agency field instructor, the conflicting messages were absent. Since I was part of staff, I could handle any resistence or ambivalence to my developing student's assignments through the existing agency structures of which I was an integral member.

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[12] Due to a shortage of space, a table was omitted here.

The second, a faculty instructor in casework, compared her experiences as an agency and faculty field instructor:

> I found it less difficult and complicated to make case assignments in an agency in which I was a staff member, than in a different agency where I am ***known*** only in my role as instructor of a student unit. Where I was a staff member, known and respected, I could state that a particular student could handle a case, and there would be little question. However, as a faculty field instructor, it is more difficult to have the agency accept my judgment. I think there may well be another reason for greater role strain in developing case assignments when employed by the school rather than the agency. As an agency employee, identified with agency practice and aware of agency needs, it was easier to accept cases given for student assignments without overly intensive scrutiny to their suitability for student learning. As instructor of a student unit, case assignments, which might be helpful to the agency's necessity, but would not be particularly suitable for a given student's learning needs, are rejected. This is an uncomfortable position for the instructor in the host agency to be in and creates many tensions with staff.

ROLE STRAIN AND JOB SATISFACTION

As previously noted, it was anticipated that field instructors' role strain would be positively associated with job satisfaction. Study findings supported this prediction.[13] Faculty field instructors were significantly less satisfied with the agency than were the agency field instructors. Only 7 percent of the faculty field instructors were highly satisfied with the agency as compared to 44 percent of the agency field instructors. Also, 30 percent of the faculty field instructors expressed low satisfaction. This may be attributed in part to their outsider status and its attendant role strain.

ROLE STRAIN AND JOB STABILITY

Faculty field instructors' role strain and dissatisfaction with their agency association affected their intention to remain.[14] It was shown that they desired to terminate their agency association more often than agency instructors. While only 24 percent of the agency field instructors desired to terminate their employment, 44 percent of the faculty field instructors desired to terminate their agency association.

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[13] Due to a shortage of space, a table was omitted here.

[14] Due to a shortage of space, a table was omitted here.

This finding certainly must be interpreted cautiously. The faculty field instructor may intend to terminate his agency association without any corresponding intention to terminate his school employment, whereas an agency field instructor who intends to terminate his agency association would be leaving his place of employment. In order to obtain a more precise parallel, the study compared the agency field instructors' intentions to remain associated with the school, to the faculty field instructors' intentions to remain associated with the agency, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Intention To Remain with Associated Organization by Field Instructor's Organizational Status

Intend to Remain	Agency	Faculty	Total
Yes	86% (N=113)	56% (N=15)	81% (N=128)
No	14% (N=18)	44% (N=12)	19% (N=30)

x^2 13.72 (P= .001)

It was clear that agency field instructors were much happier with their school association than the faculty field instructors were with their host agency. Only 14 percent of the agency field instructors intended to terminate their association with the school while 44 percent of the faculty field instructors planned to terminate their agency association. These findings suggest that there is a connection between role strain, job satisfaction, and job continuation. In other words, since faculty field instructors experienced greater role strain in developing student assignments, they were less likely to be satisfied with their agency association and less likely to remain with the associated organization than their agency counterparts.

These findings also must be interpreted cautiously. The extent to which faculty field instructors are satisfied with their agency association may itself be a determinant of role strain. Thus the question becomes: Which factor is antecedent – role strain or job dissatisfaction? It is highly probable that there is an interaction effect, with both factors reciprocally and independently affecting field instructors' desires to remain with their respective agencies.

The data in Table 2 shows the association among the three relevant variables: the influence of both role strain and agency job

TABLE 2
Proportion of Field Instructors Intending To Remain with the Agency[a] by Role Strain in Working with Agency Staff and Satisfaction with the Agency[b]

Agency Satisfaction	Role Strain in Working *with Agency Staff*		
	Yes	No	Total
High	86% (N=22)	100% (N=35)	96% (N=57)
Moderate	70% (N=40)	90% (N=27)	79% (N=67)
Low	12% (N=17)	0% (N=10)	7% (N=27)
Total	62% (N=79)	83% (N=72)	72% (N=151)

[a] The percentages represent an intention to remain with the agency (yes); the (N's) represent totals.

[b] Seven field instructors checked that the particular measure of role strain did not apply to them.

satisfaction upon field instructors' intention to remain with the agency. Field instructors who experienced no role strain in working with agency staff were more likely to desire continued association with the agency (83 percent), than those who did experience role strain (62 percent). Similarly, the greater the satisfaction with the agency, the greater was their desire to remain with the agency (96, 79, and 7 percent for those experiencing high, moderate, and low satisfaction respectively). Moreover, the data suggested that both role strain and agency job satisfaction had an impact upon field instructors' intention to continue with the agency. Only 12 percent of the field instructors experiencing role strain and low job satisfaction intended to remain with their agencies, as compared to 100 percent of the field instructors with high satisfaction and without role strain. Within the high and moderate satisfaction categories, field instructors without role strain were more likely to wish a future agency association. At the same time, the more satisfied field instructors were with their agencies, whether or not they experienced role strain, the more likely was their wish for future association.

In summary, the less that field instructors experienced role strain in developing student assignments and the more satisfied they were with their agencies, the more likely they were to wish to remain on the job. Consequently, since faculty field instructors experienced significantly greater role strain and agency job dissatisfaction than agency field instructors, they quite naturally were less likely to desire a future association with their respective social agency.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Faculty field instructors experience significantly greater role strain than do agency field instructors. The apparent organizational ambiguity associated with the faculty field instructor status creates built-in strain for the occupant of that status. As outsiders they lack leverage because negotiations with agency role-set members rests upon informal, interpersonal factors, as well as formal channels of accessibility. Their status is, in many ways, awkward and often incompatible with the agency's organizational structure and goals. Consequently they experience greater role strain and job dissatisfaction, and are more likely to dissociate themselves from their agencies than their agency counterparts.

These findings raise questions about the viability of the faculty field instructor status. To be an outsider with a unit of seven or more students, and to be dependent upon others for assignments is to be in an unenviable position. However, according to student and faculty evaluations, placement in a faculty student unit is desirable, prestigious, and educationally advantageous. Students are assured an instructor committed to their training, whose primary responsibility is their education. Thus while the current faculty student unit arrangement is structurally problematic, the basic concept seems to have merit. Hence the following structural alterations are suggested.

If the schools of social work offered the academic rank of adjunct clinical professor, highly qualified agency clinicians could maintain affiliation with their respective agencies and simultaneously be accountable as faculty members to the school. Since they would be agency employees and not outsiders they could represent and balance each organizational interest.[15]

A related but relatively separate notion is in developing a service model (analogous to a medical school) in which a school would take over either a part of or the complete administration of an agency. This could lead to effective coordination and integration of classroom and field instruction, as well as demonstration and evaluation research.[16] Two criteria for selecting an agency that would enhance the potential for effectiveness and success are: the chances of success would probably be greater in a community agency with relatively undeveloped services; and similarly, the risks would be less in an agency in which the primary function is social services. A community family agency or a settlement house would have fine potential. The opportunity for faculty to practice in the field and for clinicians to teach in the classroom could help each move to a greater level of relevance.

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[15] For a fuller perspective see Arthur C. Leader, "The Clinical Professorship in Social Work Education," *Social Casework*, Vol. 46 (June 1965), pp. 339-344.

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[16] For further discussion see Mildred Sikkema, "Analysis of Explorations Reported by Schools in the Working Party," in *Field Learning and Teaching: Explorations in Graduate Social Work Education* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1963), pp. 8-25.

Interdisciplinary Team Training: Social Work Students in Public School Field Placement Settings

by Mable T. Hawkins

In reviewing the literature concerning the education of professionals for work in public school settings, we find that at no point in the curriculum design does there seem to be an actual didactic and experiential program focusing upon coordinated interdisciplinary efforts. The need for such training, however, is frequently alluded to by educators and journalists. Silberman suggests a remaking of American education requiring "a new kind of relationship within the university between the faculties of education and the faculties of arts and sciences, law, medicine, journalism, social work, and so on, as well as new kinds of relationships between universities and public schools."[1]

Too often in public school settings we find community representatives and those from university disciplines and schools functioning autonomously. Each of the above sectors usually has its own system, hierarchies, traditions, and practices. They all seem reluctant to move from their primary identification into a situation where they might become commonly identified with the development of training programs. Ideally, the public school should be a setting where the community, school, and university disciplines cooperate to develop programs and personnel with a central focus on effective education.

Konopka notes the dilemma in which the twentieth century is caught, due to the vastly increased scientific knowledge and the mounting awareness of the interrelatedness of all sciences. Our

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[1] Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 517.

This paper was originally presented at the 19th Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education held in San Francisco, February 25-28, 1973.

Mable T. Hawkins is a field assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work.

society needs more people with broad, general knowledge in addition to more specialists with increased specialized knowledge as required within each expanding field. Konopka suggests that the "only answer is close team work," wherein team members supplement one another and constantly learn from each other.[2]

The concept of teamwork is particularly relevant to health, mental health, and school settings. With specific reference to public education, it is significant to note that an increasing number of responsibilities that were formerly assumed by the family and other systems in the community have been shifted to the schools. This has created a demand for a variety of additional services, such as programs of a medical, educational, sociological, and psychological nature. In actuality, a lack of coordinated effort together with problems in communication within the systems, results in either overlapping and conflicting goals or a minimal level of service delivery. Since public school problems are interrelated with problems of the total school and community systems, it is necessary to consider their resolution from a systems coordinated perspective.

Imperative to the achievement of a coordinated systems approach to problem solving in the public schools is the pressing need for personnel who are trained in their specialties with the added dimension of an interdisciplinary curriculum design. Costin refers to this training concept as necessary for school social workers who must respond to the challenge of the times by identifying and mastering new tasks and functions, including the facilitation of professional harmony and skill in consultation in the schools.[3] This is not to minimize the need for providing direct services; rather, it is a reemphasis upon the need to employ all social work methods for creative and innovative ways of intervention within the schools.

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT AND PURPOSE

In line with the move to enhance the effectiveness of helping personnel who work in a common school setting, a pilot project for interdisciplinary team training was initiated in a Pittsburgh secondary public school. The nine-week training seminar conducted in 1972 was designed to afford graduate students in a common school placement a look at services rendered within the placement, in addition to an opportunity to engage in both a didactic and experiential team study. The program was based upon the hypothesis that developing meaningful interpersonal relationships and understanding differential roles and functions of helping personnel from various disciplines within a secondary school setting enhance the problem-solving tasks of such personnel in providing a more effective educational program.

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[2] Gisela Konopka, *Social Group Work: A Helping Process*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 26.

[3] Lela B. Costin, "School Social Work," *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, Vol. 2, No. 16 (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1971), p. 1152.

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Schools and departments of the University of Pittsburgh from social work, psychology, education, and counselor education were represented in the seminar. A core group of fourteen participants and a professor from each of the four participating disciplines engaged in weekly, two-hour sessions. There were several informal sessions and discussions that were an outgrowth of particular interests pursued by different members of the seminar group. This seminar project was one phase of the total field practice experience. In order to link the school and other community systems with the project, provisions were made to include nonprofessionals, as warranted by the problem or situation.

Audiovisual equipment was used to evaluate the effects of the seminar and for immediate feedback for study purposes. (Introduction of video and other tape equipment during the early sessions proved threatening to the group and there was a lack of meaningful interaction until after the videotaping was discontinued). Discussion and role playing were used effectively as teaching and learning techniques.

The site of the project seminar was a secondary school, selected because of the school's involvement in the Trainers of Teacher Trainers (TTT) Program. The primary purpose of the TTT Program is aimed at increasing "the effectiveness of the nation's elementary and secondary schools by changing the systems of training educational personnel, with a direct focus upon programs for teacher trainers and trainers of teacher trainers."[4] This program embraces a philosophy congruent with nontraditional, interdisciplinary, and interdepartmental training.

The location of the school was significant because of its reflection of inner city urban problems. The community was characterized by overcrowding, inadequate facilities, and generally dysfunctional support systems for the residents. Yet hope for positive change was not completely extinguished, since there were continued efforts for problem solving both in the schools and the community.

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[4] *Training the Trainers of Teachers* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, School of Education, 1971), p. 10.

A distrust of experimentation, which has often been perceived as exploitation in deteriorating communities, is a reality that must given serious consideration upon the introduction of new programs. Therefore it was important for the training seminar to have the school principal's sanction and support. Thelen refers to the principal as "a key figure" in in-service training regardless of what he does about it. He has the power to open or shut doors to varied school programs. The dedication and creativity of school personnel is influenced by their perception of the attitude of the principal.[5]

GOALS

During the nine-week seminar the "team" planned to achieve both short- and long-range goals – that is, commitment to the purpose of the seminar, increased feelings of support, and the development of trust, all of which would facilitate a positive interaction to problem solving. It was felt that the team members might be able to try out new approaches relevant to their training and jobs. At the crucial graduate level the future practitioner and/or administrator might gain increased knowledge about group and team efforts, and incorporate behaviors that might be transferred later to actual on-the-job situations.

Essentially group methods were employed in the training seminar for the enhancement of professional interpersonal relationship skills. "Intensive research on group functioning has shown that group methods can be not only more efficient in terms of time but that intrinsic forces within groups can be released and harnessed to provide an effective crucible for the learning of interpersonal skills."[6] Implicit to the attainment of objectives of the project were the following salient features of operation as adapted from Thelen's model:[7]

1 • Improving communication between members of various disciplines through facilitating acceptance by members of each other and of disciplines represented. (There were both informal discussions and formal

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[5] Herbert Thelen, *Dynamics of Groups at Work* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 81.

[6] R. Gosling, D. H. Miller, P. M. Turquet, and D. Woodhouse, *The Use of Small Groups in Training* (London: Codicote Press, 1967), p. 7.

[7] Thelen, *op. cit.*

presentations defining the differential training, roles, and functions of the disciplines represented.)

2 • Developing commitment and cohesion in the interdisciplinary training seminar so that it has appeal for the members. (A statement of the purpose of interdisciplinary training was discussed with emphasis upon the need to free each participant from the primary restraints of his own "bureaucracy," in order to elicit energy from all members to initiate and support processes and activities of benefit to each component. Use was made of the "here and now" approach for greater self-awareness and relevancy.)

3 • Operating the group as a training situation for enabling specific members in understanding group dynamics and acquiring knowledge about methods of group problem solving. (Brief and general presentations related to group formation, values, norms, and stages of group development were reviewed. In addition, the anxieties that attend entry, attachment, interaction, and separation in the microcosm of the work group were explored and related to identical phenomena that occur with pupils in the classroom.)

4 • Influencing participants toward gradual change from the previous posture of defended autonomy to one of cooperative and collaborative efforts. (The process itself revealed a heightened level of creativity and innovation previously unavailable from the isolated competencies of the respective disciplines. Discussions were held relating to the effect of human relationships in the classroom upon learning, and the concepts of change and resistance to change as it affects behavior.[8] Insights into oneself as a student who experiences conflict around self-exposure in a learning situation, such as our work group, were linked to understanding the school child's anxiety in a similar setting.[9])

INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING: AN ILLUSTRATION

Our team faced the common tasks of all training groups in identifying and accepting goals, creating a comfortable climate, establishing an effective communication pattern, and developing a means for task achievement. During the initial sessions when the group discussed role identification and unique tasks of the respective disciplines, feelings of rejection and defensiveness emerged. The anxiety exhibited reflected both explicit and implicit feelings toward a sense of professional competitiveness and a lack of trust. Through both guided and informal discussions the group experienced learning and increased understanding relative to the diverse perceptions of pupil-teacher-parent-social worker-counselor problems. A significant revelation was the fact that within the school there did not exist an effective coordinating unit or system whereby all helping services could function at an optimal level. Adherence to specialization in performance and autonomous functioning came under question.

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[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Silberman, *op. cit.*

Faculty from the four disciplines provided highly pertinent information in defining the philosophy, curriculum design, and goals of their respective programs. Such material reinforced the group's thinking about the variety of interpretations, perceptions, and usages made of the services to be provided by these disciplines, particularly for the school in which our project was located (hereafter identified as the W school).

The limited space available in the W school for conducting the seminar influenced the degree of group cohesion and its inability to effectively work as a team at the outset. Since the administrators were unable to find another suitable meeting area, a combination classroom and supply room was the appointed site for the seminar. There was a strong reaction to the lack of privacy, since school faculty and staff using the room momentarily became a part of the group without making any commitment to group purpose or goals. This situation undoubtedly contributed to the slowing down of group processes leading to cohesion, intimacy, and the ultimate ability to solve problems as a team.

Nonetheless, by the fourth session a level of trust had been established and some honest sharing of feelings occurred. The seminar group noted discrepancies between the training of school personnel in various disciplines and schools of the university, and the perceived role functions of such personnel by the public school board. Such divergencies contribute to confusion around role expectations of professional employees in the public schools. Children and parents have suffered from these inconsistencies and divergencies. Consequently the seminar team keenly felt the need for vertical and horizontal acceptance of shared purpose and goals in the training for implementation of services within the public school systems. Expressions of greater commitment to operationalize a team approach pervaded the meeting.

The team also found a need to understand terminology used by different professional staff, in an effort to facilitate communication. Such terms as "CA-5 forms" (for reporting absenteeism), "master (curriculum) charts," and "dyads" (the coupling of people) were but a few terms used by teachers, counselors, and social workers respectively, which were not commonly understood by all team members.

A concrete problem was presented to the team during the sixth meeting. In characteristic fashion, the disciplines tackled the problem from different perspectives, yet there were areas of mutual concern.

The problem was that of a twelve-year-old, male, seventh-grade pupil who was failing math for not attending class. He had presented a number of school and classroom adjustment problems since kindergarten. This pupil (hereafter referred to as J) professed a real intolerance for large groups. Psychological tests administered to J at the fifth-grade level revealed an average IQ, resulting in J's eligibility for placement in a small class for socially and emotionally disturbed children (SED). J achieved satisfactorily in the SED classes but did not achieve in other classes. The SED class has the ultimate goal of enabling the pupil to return to regular classes.

As team members deliberated appropriate interventive methods they used their developing respect and recognition of different disciplines to share ideas and enhance efforts in providing service. The social worker's systems analysis approach for determining appropriate points of intervention enabled the teachers to gain greater insight into cause and effect behavior. J had succeeded in manipulating several math teachers to the extent that he moved in and out of regular math classes, or simply roamed the halls. This situation came to light during a team meeting. The teachers admitted that they had not attempted to consult persons or reports from other helping disciplines such as counselors, psychologists, or social workers because it was not a practice to use these services in classroom problem solving. They also expressed a sense of futility in attempting to seek help, due to the overwhelming total school situation.

In ensuing meetings, team members discussed values and norms related to a range of issues, such as school board management as it affects inner city schools, the confidentiality of pupil's school records, attitudes about race and sincerity – and their effect on pupil-teacher relationships, and the validity of IQ tests. Such shared personal opinions created closer interpersonal working relationships. The presentations of employed staff and community representatives who were asked to serve as resource persons gave the team additional information and afforded the members an opportunity to better understand the systems interaction within and without the school.

EVALUATION BY PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING SEMINAR

A questionnaire was developed by participants in the Interdisciplinary Training Seminar for the purpose of evaluating their experience in relation to the program goals. From a fairly constant core group of ten student participants nine responses to the questionnaire were received. Of the nine respondents, four represented social work, four represented the field of education (teachers and supervisors), and one represented counselor education. There was a general congruency in their attitudes toward the seminar experience. Expectations ranged from learning more about the roles and functions of personnel from other disciplines in the school program, to gaining knowledge of the appropriate usage of such helping personnel. Participating faculty responses strongly endorsed the need for such a seminar.

The following questions were presented on the questionnaire:

1 • What were your expectations for the team approach seminar experience?
2 • Do you think there is value in the interdisciplinary team approach to problem solving in the school?
3 • Do you feel you have become more knowledgeable about role function of various helping disciplines within the school system? Example.
4 • Describe your feelings regarding this group experience in terms of your own participation?
5 • What suggestions do you have for making the seminar experience more meaningful?

Responses to the first question were influenced greatly by the degree of leadership effectiveness in presenting the goals and purposes to the participants. Of course, specific individual needs, awareness, understanding, and goals were reflected in responses to each of the questions.

Out of nine responses to question 1, six indicated expectations that involved combined didactic and experiential group learning relative to awareness of diverse role functions of helping persons in the school setting; two expected primarily a didactic format; and one expected primarily an experiential group format.

To question 2 there was a unanimous positive answer, although one respondent expressed doubt that such an ideal approach would be practical in terms of the kind of commitment and funding required to increase staff sufficient to meet any single school's need.

To question 3, eight respondents indicated increased knowledge regarding the functions of school personnel from other disciplines, and also a change in attitude and intent toward more collaboration in problem solving. The responses to question 4 were generally indicative of a desire for greater opportunity to actually function as a team in numerous problem-solving situations. There were also expressions of developing trust, understanding, and acceptance of others through the seminar experience.

In response to the fifth question, there were various suggestions. Five respondents felt that the time for the seminar should have been extended to allow for maximum benefits to the team members and the students who would receive help. It was felt that changes relative to knowledge about the functions of other disciplines, interpersonal relationships that facilitate team work, and commitment to the seminar goals and purpose required more time than was allotted. However, it was felt that presentations of administrators of the respective disciplines should not be spread out over several weeks. Other suggestions concerned extension of the team to incorporate practitioners in the various disciplines who are actually employed, setting up smaller groups for more effective implementation of team problem solving, and greater emphasis upon initial clarification of goals and orientation to group processes for all participants.

CONCLUSION

Included in the rationale for this presentation was the hope that this type of project might be replicated in other schools to test its reliability and practicality. Although the Interdisciplinary Team Training Seminar was a pilot effort of limited duration, the findings were significant enough to warrant its continuation into the second year at the W school. In addition, there are plans to implement the design into the School Social Work Certification Program sponsored jointly by the School of Social Work and the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Finally, we are consulting with the Pittsburgh Board of Education in their efforts to incorporate a similar project for their pupil personnel staff.

Initiation of the project presents some organizational problems that must be resolved at both the university and local school levels. Commitment to the value of the program should facilitate the resolution of interdepartmental and interdisciplinary problems that might hamper such an effort. Time, schedules, and space are realistic factors to be considered.

The interdisciplinary team training experience seems to be crucial for inclusion in the curriculum design of undergraduate and graduate students who are on the threshold of accepting employment in schools or other multidisciplinary settings. If we are to become effective advocates and systems change agents for the receivers of service, the adoption of new programs stemming from observed community needs is mandatory.

The Training Center Concept: Educating Social Workers for a Changing World

by Mildred E. Knappe

A major concern in designing an educational program is not only present relevancy, but also future usefulness. This raises the question of what kind of education is required to prepare social workers for practice in a rapidly changing world. In such a world "the aim of education must be to develop individuals who are open to change," because "only such persons can constructively meet the perplexities of a world in which problems spawn faster than their answers. . . . In the coming world the capacity to face the new appropriately is more important than the ability to know and repeat the old."[1]

Alfred North Whitehead defined education as "the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge."[2] Social work education is that, plus the acquisition of the art of creative utilization of self in applying knowledge appropriately. Therefore the field experience or practicum is a vital area of social work education since "it is in field instruction that the student learns to do and, in the main, learns what he should be."[3]

One of the dilemmas confronting social work educators is "how to produce the practitioners of tomorrow within the structure of existing social work services."[4] The purpose of this article

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[1] Carl R. Rogers, *Freedom To Learn* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1969), p. 304.

[2] Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 4.

[3] Bernece K. Simon, "Design of Learning Experiences in Field Instruction," *Social Service Review*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (December 1966), p. 397.

[4] Katherine A. Kruse, "Discussion of Three Papers on Recent Innovations in Practice and Teaching Centers in Schools of Social Work at Annual Program Meeting, Council on Social Work Education, January 25, 1968, Minneapolis, Minnesota," (Appendix for a report to the Council on Social Work Education Commission on Accreditation submitted by faculty of the School of Social Work, the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, August, 1968), p. 102.

Mildred E. Knappe is affiliated with the Iowa Division of the American Cancer Society, serving as the executive in the Linn County Information Center.

is to describe how a social work training center in Iowa is responding to that dilemma. It is written from the perspective of a consumer with career goals related to the service of families. Since the objectives of the practicum are part of a total curriculum, a bit of background information about the University of Iowa School of Social Work and the genesis of the Cedar Rapids Social Work Training Center will lead into the actual description of the training center structure, activities, and educational philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE IOWA SCHOOL

Recognizing the need for social workers who are adaptable, flexible, diversified, and creative the Iowa School emphasizes the common elements of social work practice so that graduates will have the ability to function professionally in a variety of settings and situations. A continuum of class instruction is coordinated with a community-based practicum.

> The concept of the triad of practicum, instructor-agency-community, serves as the base for enhancing the educational experience in two dimensions. That is, each student is to be exposed (not only) to a greater breadth of experience in person-problem situations and the resources provided by a given community for resolving or ameliorating them but also the range of methods and techniques employed in social work practice.[5]

The philosophy of the Iowa School is that the "most effective practitioner is that one who can see how all aspects of our society are interrelated." To this end the practicum is based on "opportunities for the student to experience directly the impact of the community – the process of interrelationships, the process of change."[6] Students learn experientially that interventive goals may be affected by community resources. Emphasis is placed on "developing a social work practitioner who is able to function more realistically in relation to the complex of problems with which all communities are confronted."[7] One of the four community-based practicum placements to which students may be assigned is located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a city of 110,000 population.

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[7] University of Iowa School of Social Work Application for Inclusion in United Community Services Linn County, Iowa, July 17, 1972, p. 2.

GENESIS OF CEDAR RAPIDS SOCIAL WORK TRAINING CENTER

Creation of the Cedar Rapids Social Work Training Center in 1966 was due to a unique set of circumstances.[8] The Iowa School was looking for a new format for practicum at a time when the climate in the Cedar Rapids community was favorable for the development of a training center. The university needed resources for practicum placements; the agencies welcomed the service provided by students with instruction by training center faculty. The center became involved in developing services where they did not exist. Faculty have always been involved in student activities as well as with community activities.

After the first year of operation the community responded by allocating further support "with enthusiasm *and* an increased volume of funds."[9] A union of "town and gown," the training center is funded by both public and private dollars. Housing and utilities are provided by the public sector as an "in kind" contribution. The private sector pays the salary of the office manager, telephone, and students' travel expenses within the community. The center is staffed by two university faculty. The number of graduate students placed in the center annually for the ten-month practicum experience ranges from ten to fifteen. In addition, the center is used as a field placement for undergraduate social work students, which provides an opportunity for supervision experience by graduate students.

TRAINING CENTER STRUCTURE AND RATIONALE

Sanctioned by the community, the training center provides the structure for organizing the variety of agency and community experiences that are considered essential for each student. It is based on what Schubert described as "*the teaching center concept* . . . with educational control of quality in school-employed field teachers, curriculum design, objectives, content, and learning opportunities."[10] The three major goals of the training center are to:

1 • Educate and train graduate and undergraduate students.
2 • Perform some measure of service to the community.

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[8] Interview with Katherine A. Kruse, School of Social Work, University of Iowa, August 13, 1973.

[9] Kruse, "Discussion of Three Papers," *op. cit.*, p. 105.

[10] Margaret Schubert, "Making the Best Use of Traditional and Atypical Field Placements," in *Current Patterns in Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education*, ed. Betty Lacy Jones (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1969), p. 7.

3 • Engage in research activities that will benefit the students' education and the community's service delivery system.

Service is channeled through existing agencies in the community; responsibility for all clients remains with participating agencies. The center serves as home base for the student social worker. Clients are seen at the respective agencies. Instruction comes from the training center faculty.

In contrast to the more traditional one-agency placement, the training center provides an opportunity for students to draw appropriate learning experiences from a range of agencies. The eclecticism is focused on a particular client group and/or the career goal of each student. The multi-agency experiences enable the student to "observe similarities that will reinforce each other."[11] This avoids the limitations expressed by Kindelsperger that "many agencies have only limited opportunities for experience in community work, or group work, or research, and the attachment of the student solely to them therefore, denies *breadth and diversity*."[12] In the training center, the focus is on education rather than apprenticeship.

Individualized and focused on the objectives, learning needs, and career goals of the student, the assignments reflect a range of social work practice opportunities.[13] The training center educational program includes the use of a variety of interventive strategies, skills, and techniques in direct service to individuals and families, group and community work, and work with other disciplines. It also features research, consultation, planning, and creation of new types of service delivery. This eclectic approach is aimed toward developing practitioners who are flexible and adaptable, and who can respond appropriately and creatively to the needs of a rapidly changing world. For purposes of a concrete illustration, attention is focused on one aspect of social work, the field of family welfare.

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[11] Carol H. Meyer, "Integrating Practice Demands in Social Work Education," *Social Casework*, Vol. 49, No. 8 (October 1968), p. 485.

[12] W. L. Kindelsperger and Helen Cassidy, *Social Work Training Centers: Tentative Analysis of the Structure and Learning Environment* (New Orleans: Tulane University School of Social Work, 1966), p. v.

[13] To insure "a meshing of agency program, consumer needs, learning expectations and and objectives, and actualization of student's plan of study," a practicum assignment form is completed for each assignment. It spells out specific goals and objectives of the assignment, and defines how student involvement in the particular setting meets "identified learning needs, interests, career goals, and requirements." It also defines what is expected from the student in the way of service and accountability and further, it describes the "nature of on-going liaison between educational coordinator, agency/staff person and student."

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES

Social work as a profession grew out of a response to the needs of families.[14] Since its inception, social work has been interested in strengthening and supporting the family. Assaulted by rapid societal change, the family now requires increased community support to strengthen its capacity to function as the bridge to other institutions. Needs call for a response. Ideas and concepts call for a translation into new avenues of service delivery. Gelfand, in a recent article, pointed out emerging theories, concepts, and methods of social treatment with the challenge that such theories and concepts call for "creative response in the users." One of his suggestions was the concept of "peer helping" where, in the midst of societal change and family mobility, "the family, by acting as a mutual aid system, can counteract and neutralize the shock of social displacement."[15]

Another concept awaiting further use is one advocated by Kahn, that of "social utilities," which is a network of social services that would be available to everyone in the community.[16] This service network would include information, plus supportive and enabling resources to help families cope effectively and constructively with new and different responsibilities at various stages in the family life cycle. The Child Welfare League has expressed the need as follows:

> Society's special concern for children can best be discharged by buttressing the family as the optimum environment for child-rearing, and by providing the aids and support that any parent in a complex society may at some time need and benefit by – such as preparation for marriage and parenthood, family planning, prenatal care, health services, housing, financial assistance, and social services that preserve and strengthen family life and facilitate the parental role.[17]

Services as described here require social workers who can function both as "people helpers," and "system changers."[18] The most effective social worker for shaping family welfare policy, and for engaging in this kind of service delivery will be one who is familiar with how a community functions in relation to social service resources and identification of and response to needs, and one who is innovative and self-directed.

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[14] Harriett M. Bartlett; *The Common Base of Social Work Practice* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1970), p. 21.

[15] Bernard Gelfand, "Emerging Trends in Social Treatment," *Social Casework*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (March 1972), pp. 158 & 162.

[16] For further definition see Alfred J. Kahn, "Social Services as Social Utilities," *Urban Development: Its Implications for Social Welfare*, Proceedings of the 13th International Conference of Social Work (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

[17] *A National Program for Comprehensive Child Welfare Services* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1971), p. 7.

[18] Bartlett, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

For a student with career goals in the field of family welfare, learning experiences at the training center could include any of the following: counseling in a family service agency; work with the parents of preschool children; providing the social work component in a child evaluation center; organizing a family education center; participation in planning and development of a demonstration social service center in a rural community; social work in the schools, probation department, or neighborhood; or active membership with a funding agency budget review committee. This list points out the breadth and diversity of opportunity available to students. "The experience of working with a number of agencies, essentially as representatives of those agencies, gives the students an opportunity to observe the total program and yet maintain sufficient distance to develop a critical perspective of the services provided."[19]

The training center education also provides a perspective from which to view the community as a macrosystem for identifying unmet needs of families. The educational experience is existential in that it is built around self-directed and interest-dominated learning.

PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

Students come into the training center with different levels of experience, interests, and career goals. A hallmark of the training center concept is an individualized program that offers a combination of community perspective and a broad range of diverse experiences to each student. The teaching philosophy is based on the principle that graduate students are adult learners. These factors delineate the approach of the faculty, who function as facilitators. The student is engaged as a learner "first and foremost by connecting with his motivation and investment, and second with his own particular learning bent or favored mode of learning." Further, to facilitate growth in new directions, faculty assure "that the learning opportunities and demands make it necessary for each learner to stretch himself as well in the directions that are not his particular bent."[20]

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[19] Kruse, "Discussion of Three Papers," *op. cit.*, p. 105.

[20] Mary Louise Somers, "Dimensions and Dynamics of Engaging the Learner," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall 1971), p. 52.

In a discussion of the adult learner Knowles referred to the facilitator as an "andragogical teacher," who "plans the learning experiences with the students and shares responsibility with them for executing the plans."[21] The primary orientation is much like that of Carl Rogers who sees facilitation of learning as the proper approach for graduate education. According to him, the educated person is one "who has learned how to learn . . . who has learned to adapt and change . . . who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security."[22] Knowles, like Rogers, sees education "not as a process of transmitting knowledge, but as a process of inquiry – mutual, self-directed inquiry."[23] Engaged in the educational process, faculty and students working together become a community of learners.

The pattern of self-directed learning extends both to individual and group needs. Each student formulates learning goals and chooses the field experiences he thinks lead toward his goals. In like manner, the group discusses and formulates common learning goals, generating issues around which group experiences are designed and carried out in what is known as a "skills development lab."

For instance, early in the practicum the group may decide that interviewing is the most appropriate and necessary skill to be developed. A sequence of group exercises around such concepts as perception, observation, coding/decoding, active listening, and engaging the client lead into role-play situations around interviewing. Or the skills development lab may provide the milieu for "trying on" various models of practice in simulated situations prior to application to practice. In the realm of community or agency decision making, leadership styles, various roles of group members, and group process are practiced and observed in simulated situations. Evaluation and feedback on group experiences are provided by both faculty and students. Since professional skills "emerge from the development of valid generalizations,"[24] emphasis is placed on conceptualizing learning through analyzing a particular experience to determine how principles learned can be applied to a variety of situations. Appropriate knowledge is introduced by both faculty and students. Along with the evaluation of the group experience, self-evaluation is a constant watchword.

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[21] Malcolm S. Knowles, "Innovations in Teaching Styles and Approaches Based Upon Adult Learning," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring 1972), p. 39.

[22] Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

[23] Knowles, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

[24] Helen Harris Perlman, ed., *Helping: Charlotte Towle on Social Work and Social Casework* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 77.

MAXIMIZING LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Learning is maximized through recording both client interviews and community or client group meetings. This forces the student to engage in thoughtful attention to analysis of the interaction, his role in the situation, effectiveness of techniques and strategies employed, group process, setting goals, and planning for future intervention. Taping client interviews for later analysis is another learning resource that may be used. Acting as a participant observer in community assignments to boards and committees, the student not only learns through active participation in the decision-making and planning process, but also through later analysis. Another learning resource is the use of videotape equipment both for filming skill development lab experiences and for use in individual or joint projects.

As students work within the various agencies they are able to observe a number of professionals. These contacts provide the advantage of accessibility to a variety of role models. The community experience also provides an opportunity to observe professionals at work in the decision-making process. In addition, from time to time arrangements are made to bring practitioners from the community into the training center for participation in the skill development component of the educational program.

Students are encouraged to develop imaginative and innovative forms of service delivery that can be sponsored by community agencies. For example, one student designed and implemented an art therapy group experience for young children with behavior problems. Another innovative project was a family education center, which was operated as a joint venture with one public and two private agencies. Families were referred by the agencies, who saw the center as an ancillary service that could enhance their counseling process. The center was staffed jointly by students and professional social workers.

SOCIALIZATION INTO THE PROFESSION

Although it is somewhat outside the main thrust of this presentation, it seems important to point out another advantage of the training center concept. Socialization into the profession is an important aspect of social work education. Towle said that:

> The student must find within his profession his ideal of himself and must struggle not merely to attain it but to contend for the profession's ideals in a world which fre-

> quently contests them. He must prove not only his own worth as a professional person but his profession's worth as a profession.[25]

Socialization into the profession is facilitated by observation of and interaction with community practitioners and training center faculty. It is also facilitated by the peer group. The training center concept makes it possible to bring together a significant number of individuals who are in the same situation, who can perform an important function in socialization into the profession. Indeed, "peer validation . . . is one of the most vital assets" in the training center because:

> The enlargement of the scope of social systems inherent in the training center also creates a substantial amount of life space within which the adult learner and his peers can maneuver in arriving at satisfactory ego decisions and behavior adjustments: opportunities for satisfying the basic need for "private consent." It is this factor which enhances the possibility of his creative socialization into the profession.[26]

Since social work involves the creative use of self, increasing self-awareness is a vital part of social work education. Professional development and personal growth are two sides of the same coin. A sense of who one is and what one brings to the helping situation is necessary for understanding and helping others. As Rogers put it, "when the person accepts *himself*, he is much more free to hear and understand and come close to the other."[27] Self-knowledge is a first step to self-acceptance. Interaction with the peer group both in structured learning experiences and in formal and informal peer consultation are facilitative aids to professional development and to personal growth.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing has been an attempt to describe how the Cedar Rapids Social Work Training Center, through a community-based practicum, is responding to the challenge of educating social workers who can function appropriately in a rapidly changing world. For the social worker, to cope with change is not enough. What is required is the ability to bring a humanizing balance between the demands of the changing environment and the needs of people. The combination of community perspective and a broad range of diverse experiences, balanced with a program of facilitated learning based on a philosophy of education that nurtures self-direction and self-awareness is the training center response to the challenge.

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 273.

[26] Kindelsperger and Cassidy, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[27] Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

Although the foregoing account has been enthusiastically favorable, at this point recognition is given to the fact that the training center is not necessarily *the* way for all social work education. There are issues and concerns to be considered. For instance, lack of depth of study in a particular mode of intervention could be considered a deficit. Also, effectiveness hinges on community acceptance. Further, problems could arise in maintaining a balance between community needs and the focus on the educational value of student assignments.

A most vital issue revolves around the personnel who make up the system. The program demands a unique kind of faculty – facilitators who can be comfortable in a democratic atmosphere and who are able to maintain the delicate balance of shared authority in their relationship with students. Conversely, it demands students who are willing to accept the responsibility inherent in such an atmosphere of freedom and shared authority.

Admittedly, no educational experience can be all things to all people. However it can be said that the Cedar Rapids Training Center provides a milieu in which adult learners can acquire the art of utilization of self in applying knowledge appropriately. Over and above that, beyond the polishing of technical skills, the practicum experience is designed to be durable and permanent in a changing world because the climate encourages students to become learners who are flexible, adaptable, and open. It is aimed toward producing what Carl Rogers saw as a theoretical model of the person who emerges from the best of education. His description of the model will serve as an appropriate summation. It is:

> the individual who has experienced optimal psychological growth – a person functioning freely in all the fullness of his organismic potentialities; a person who is dependable in being realistic, self-enhancing, socialized, and appropriate in his behavior; a creative person, whose specific formings of behavior are not easily predictable; a person who is ever-changing, ever-developing, always discovering himself and the newness in himself in each succeeding moment of time.[28]

What could be more appropriate and in keeping with fundamental social work values!

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[28] *Ibid.*, p. 295.

A Model for Community-Oriented Field Experience

by Marilyn H. Lammert & Jan Hagen

As an innovative approach to social work education, the model proposed here for field experience of students interested in community-oriented social work practice offers a unique opportunity for training workers. This model for field instruction focuses on community mental health and uses a variety of social work intervention methods. These methods involve an approach to the entire community as a way of obtaining and aiding citizen involvement in institutional and community change. It is a unified approach to community work incorporating social work activities under the rubric of comprehensive mental health.

This approach recognizes the profession's responsibility to be receptive to community needs and frees it from some of the traditional methods of establishing what and how services will be offered to a community. In addition, although the separation within the profession between caseworkers, groupworkers, and community organizers has become less distinct and the intraprofessional controversies have lessened, there still exists the need for workers with all types of specializations to combine their skills for the overall benefit of the client system. The model proposed here provides such an opportunity.

We will provide a model outline and list the general goals and the major components. Elaboration will be provided by describing each aspect as it was operationalized within the Normandy Field Unit, a student practicum unit under the auspices of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, which was developed by two faculty members during the fall of 1970. Actual operation of the unit began in January 1971 and ran through May 1972. During the first semester of operation (January through May 1971), the unit was

Marilyn H. Lammert is director of the Center for Health Services Careers and Jan Hagen is an instructor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Health Services.

composed of the two faculty practicum instructors and eleven first-year graduate students with extremely diversified backgrounds. The unit resumed its activities in September 1971 with six second-year students and, as the semester progressed, two first-year students became members of the unit.

The unit was not directly responsible to any existing community agency but operated directly under the auspices of the school of social work. The community in which the unit operated was characterized by few social welfare agencies, a low level of citizen organization and participation, and a lack of centralized political authority. It consisted of twenty-six independent municipalities with the school district providing the only common geographical boundaries. It was an area undergoing rapid social change and racial integration. As a learning project focused on community mental health, the unit used a variety of social work activities in approaching the entire community.

GOALS OF THE PRACTICUM UNIT

The primary goal of any practicum is student learning regarding professional social work practice. Within the Normandy Field Unit this primary goal was further delineated as follows:

1 • To provide an experience in creating a professional role to meet community needs rather than those prescribed by existing professional models.
2 • To provide an exposure to a variety of interventions with individuals and groups, all within the context of a community setting.
3 • To provide an exposure to conditions affecting community mental health and educational issues from a position outside existing professional institutions.
4 • To provide an experience in creating an agency focused on community needs.

In addition to these overall goals, individual student goals existed. Practica at this school are designed and negotiated by the student, who is responsible for identifying his learning objectives and the means of achieving them. Within the Normandy Field Unit these objectives covered a broad range of social work activities, from dyadic interactions to community dynamics. One of the most important learning objectives identified by students was that of developing a greater awareness of group dynamics and increasing skills of groupwork techniques, such as organizing new groups, planning meetings, recognizing and developing leadership potential, and so on. The other objective was to increase skills in community organization and to develop a basic insight into effective social work interventive methods on a community level.

STUDENT UNIT

One of the basic elements in this model is the student unit.[1] A practicum unit working under the auspices of the university engages a number of students with similar or related learning objectives in providing community service. The suggested unit size ranges from six to eight. As indicated earlier, the first semester of the Normandy Field Unit's operation included eleven students with two practicum instructors. It would appear that for a number greater than eight, two instructors are necessary. It should be noted however, that this organizational arrangement may lead to administrative difficulties.[2] Rather than being a segment or an arm of a particular community agency, the unit itself becomes the "agency" providing services.

The decision to become a part of a student practicum unit for field instruction should be made by the individual student, with the consultation of his advisor, on the basis of whether or not this would fulfill his individual learning objectives. Thus student learning needs become the basis of practicum determination, rather than arbitrary assignment or assignment by broad interest areas.

One of the mechanisms for realizing student learning objectives was providing service to community. Within the Normandy Field Unit, students identified areas or groups that related to their interests and learning objectives. Out of this, interventive strategies for involvement were identified and pursued. The underlying theme in all of the service tasks was to foster citizen participation in gaining control over their own lives and thereby improving general community mental health. Therefore any activity that helped increase the residents' control over their environment was regarded as an appropriate social work activity. The only limitation was the individual learning objectives identified by the students in their practica proposals.

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[1] For further information see for example: Arnold Gurin, *Community Organization in Graduate Social Work Education: Report and Recommendations* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1970); and Herman D. Stein, "Cross-Currents in Practice, Undergraduate, and Graduate Education in Social Work," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1965), pp. 56-67.

[2] This bureaucratic structure, known as a polyarchy, is discussed extensively by Bertram M. Gross, *Organizations and Their Managing* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 230-41.

The Normandy Field Unit established service relationships with basically three difference categories of community groups: (1) groups associated with the school administration, (2) groups associated with a municipal council, a federation of the twenty-six municipalities representing the geographical area served, and (3) independent citizen groups, that is, those groups not related to political or educational institutions. Within these groups the students engaged in numerous social work activities and roles, ranging from assessing individual leadership potential to serving as consultants.

GROUP SUPERVISION BY FACULTY MEMBERS

A second basic component of this model is the use of full-time faculty members to provide field instruction and supervision. This mechanism helps provide a more direct link between classroom learning and field learning. Also, the use of university faculty helps insure quality student supervision and experiences related to student needs rather than agency needs. The faculty practicum instructor is in an ideal position to relate the two types of educational experiences.

While some student learning occurs when providing services to a community, this can be maximized through group supervision.[3] It is through group supervisory sessions that many individual learning needs are met. At these sessions, individual tasks and activities are discussed by the entire unit in terms of assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating. The faculty practicum instructor must assume the responsibility for determining the format, setting up the guidelines, and creating the appropriate atmosphere. In other words, the instructor assumes the leadership responsibility for the group sessions.

During these sessions the instructor has the greatest amount of teaching input. However, an underlying assumption regarding the use of group supervision is that graduate social work students are adult learners capable of learning from each other as well as teaching each other. Within graduate schools, much student learning does occur in this lateral manner. The provision for group supervision is an effort to formally utilize and maximize the potential of this resource. Therefore, during such group supervisory sessions students are expected to contribute suggestions and insights. Group supervision has the additional advantage of unifying and consolidating the total unit effort within the community served.

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[3] For additional information on group supervisory models see for example: George S. Gerzel, Jack R. Goldberg, and Robert Solman, "Supervising in Groups as a Model for Today," *Social Casework*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (March 1971), pp. 154-63; Jadwiga Judd, Regina E. Kohn, and Gerda L. Schulman, "Group Supervision: A Vehicle for Professional Development," *Social Work*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (January 1962), pp. 96-102; John Wax, "The Pros and Cons of Group Supervision," *Social Casework*, Vol. 40, No. 6 (June 1959), pp. 18-22; and John Harper, "Group Supervision of Students," *Social Work*, (London), Vol. 26, No. 4 (October 1969), pp. 18-22.

Such a supervisory model places high demands on the instructor. Not only must he be aware and knowledgeable of community processes and dynamics but also must be skilled in interviewing and group development and process. The position also requires a great deal of flexibility.

Mayers presents three models for teaching social work students in the field: cognitive, affective, and work group. Although she refers to these as group teaching models, it is difficult to distinguish them from supervision as discussed here. The cognitive model is similar to the classroom discussion group and is used during orientation and for introduction to new content. The affective model is used to deal with student initial or termination anxiety and with conflict over social work values, knowledge, or behaviors. The work group model is used for "how" learning and to develop effective task performance, accountability, and control over services offered.[4]

Within the model presented here, all three have been incorporated into one. Although the teaching of "how" in terms of task performance is the prime focus, the model does not attempt to separate theoretical bases for practice or affective issues that may arise in conjunction with practice. It is recognized that both are an integral part of learning and should be integrated in the learning experience rather than "departmentalized." Both feelings and theories have a direct bearing on the quality of practice and must be dealt with in conjunction with learning practice skills.

Group supervision should be supplemented by individual conferences to deal with situations that students and/or the instructor feel are more appropriately handled outside the group supervisory sessions. In addition, individual conferences are needed to handle emergency situations or rapidly changing situations that frequently occur in a community-oriented placement.

One other point regarding group supervision needs to be made: in order to facilitate group supervisory sessions it is advisable for the group members to share similar tasks, such as working with community groups or interviewing community residents. These activities are readily generalizable and increase the probability of lateral learning. In terms of service to the community, it is advis-

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[4] Fredericka Mayers, "Differential Use of Group Teaching in First-Year Field Work," *Social Service Review*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (March 1970), pp. 63-75.

able to have students working with different segments of the same community. This may lead to linkage across various community groupings as a result of shared information between unit members. In addition, it may provide a better understanding of community dynamics.

Within the Normandy Field Unit, instruction and supervision occurred very much along the lines outlined above and were provided primarily through weekly sessions referred to as "group consultation," which was defined as follows:

> Group consultation is designed to deal with the specific learning needs of the unit members as related to their individual tasks and activities within the community. Examples of appropriate discussion items are: interviewing difficulties, planning for group meetings, designing strategies to carry out assigned tasks, and evaluation of performance during interviews and group meetings. It is expected that all students will contribute to finding solutions to problems and difficulties presented during consultation, as well as providing feedback to one another regarding performance. It is expected that the field instructor will provide the guidelines and format for these sessions.

These sessions not only provided supervision and instruction from the faculty practicum instructor but allowed for peer consultation. Operationally, these sessions provided coordination of services and the development of a team approach to service delivery within the community. Decision making for the unit as a service agency became a cooperative effort between instructor and students.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

In addition to providing community service and group supervision, a third mechanism for realizing learning objectives emerged as the unit developed. During the first semester of operation the unit designed and carried out an independent study to provide students additional help in recognizing stages of group development and in facilitating group process. During the second academic year, several in-service training sessions were held. They related to theoretical issues that had arisen out of the practice involvement. For instance, one such session dealt with theoretical models for viewing communities; another dealt with specific interviewing skills appropriately utilized in work with community leaders. In a sense, these sessions helped bridge the gap between the field placement and classroom instruction in that they were specifically related to the placement but were more theoretically oriented than the usual group consultation sessions.

PROBLEMS

Two basic problems arose during the course of the unit's operation that affected realization of student learning objectives. The first of these was establishing legitimacy within the community. Of necessity a great deal of time and effort was spent in building working relationships with community members and leaders. But until these relationships were well-established, the degree of student involvement and influence in the community was limited. After the first semester, relationships were fairly well-established and the unit was recognized as a viable force within the community.

The second problem related to unit goals. The unit had learning as its primary goal, with provision of community services as its secondary goal. At times the unit did find it difficult to separate the two, as well as maintain the established priority. When such difficulties arose they were resolved through group problem solving during the weekly group consultation meetings. The specific issues involved were isolated and then discussed. Once the issues were clearly stated it was possible to separate the goals and reestablish the primary one.

SUMMARY

The model proposed here is designed specifically for community-oriented practica. This is not to imply that its usefulness is limited to such practica. Rather, it is an indication of the extent to which the model has been developed thus far. In this case, student learning occurred within the context of providing services to a community.

In summarizing the Normandy Field Unit experience it may be said that students developed varying degrees of skills in working with community groups, setting them up around issues, or serving as consultants, facilitators, and/or activators for an existing formal or informal grouping. Not only were students involved in decision making for the entire unit but they also developed skill in analyzing groups, individuals, organizations, and communities; in interviewing groups; in program planning and evaluation; and in linking individuals, groups, and organizations within the community to achieve a common goal. It was assumed that these skills would be necessary in any position graduates would hold, especially those in which social workers traditionally have not been utilized.

Since they had no agency that served as a source of legitimation, students learned to identify themselves with community needs and interests, or with a coalition around a single need or interest. The community was thus seen as a necessary context for practice – nothing could be undertaken apart from community needs. With this as a learning base, the students' consideration of community mental health needs and potentials in their future professional undertakings will no doubt be enhanced.

A number of questions may be raised in regard to this model. Of particular interest is its applicability to a wide range of community settings and to other types of social work practice. Its effectiveness, compared to the traditional approach, cannot be determined until more accurate means of measuring social work skills have been developed. The model does seem to have distinct advantages in terms of formalizing lateral student learning as a significant adjunct to the traditional hierarchical learning. It also effectively bridges the gap between classroom and field placement by utilizing full-time faculty as field instructors. Perhaps its main strength lies in its flexibility, which allows community residents, students, and university faculty to create innovative opportunities for delivering services.

The Teaching-Learning Setting in a First-Year Field Instruction Program

by Nell Lipscomb

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written in recent years about the dichotomy between the delivery of direct services and social welfare policy, community organization, and planning. Social workers often look upon the political and legislative arena as an area outside their practice competence or professional interest. Unfortunately, the war of rhetoric between those who are direct-service oriented and those who are community organizers and planners continues to rage.

As the need for professional social workers with a variety of skills becomes more critically apparent, many graduate schools of social work are extending the teaching-learning environment into nontraditional settings, especially governmental offices. Reports of these placements indicate excellent results, both for the social work student and the legislators. The latter are familiarized with the contributions and expertise of the social work profession, particularly in social welfare legislation and public policy formation. Graduate schools of social work, including those at Tulane University, Wayne State University, and the State University of New York at Stony Brook have placed second-year community organization students in legislative offices. Reports of some of these placements are described in recent journal articles.[1]

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[1] See for example, Shirley J. Jones, "New Teaching Settings and Their Relevance for Social Work Education," *Social Work Education Reporter*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (April-May 1972), pp. 52-56, which describes students' experiences and the learning objectives in the office of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm; and Franklin M. Zweig, "The Social Worker as Ombudsman," in *Social Workers at Work*, Tony Tripodi, Phillip Fellin, Irwin Epstein, and Roger Lind, ed. (Itasca, Illinois: E.A. Peacock Publishers, 1972), which describes community organization placements in a variety of legislative offices dating from 1966.

This paper was originally presented at the 19th Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education held in San Francisco, February 25-28, 1973.

Nell Lipscomb is an assistant professor at the Tulane University School of Social Work.

THE TULANE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK GENERIC PROGRAM

At the Tulane University School of Social Work the first-year field instruction program is a generic one.[2] First-year students are placed in neighborhood-based training centers established by the school. A full-time faculty member arranges and coordinates the teaching-learning assignments across fields of practice and social work methodologies. To implement this program, students are assigned to work with individuals, families, small groups, and the neighborhood-community, utilizing a wide range of social work methodologies. This report describes the experiences of the students in the Central City Training Center, which is located in the sunday school wing of a Black church in the heart of a large, urban, low-income housing project.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Central City Training Center, adjacent to the central business district, serves a neighborhood with boundaries created by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Because the boundaries of this neighborhood were established for purposes of OEO poverty programs, it lacks the usual sense of community of many neighborhoods. Within this area numerous agencies offer services to the residents. Few services are neighborhood-based, although increasingly some programs are being decentralized.

In the Central City Training Center sixteen first-year students and one full-time field faculty member are housed. The students are divided into two units of eight, with one half in the field on Tuesday and Thursday, and the other half on Wednesday and Thursday. Staff meetings and consultation concerning common assignments are scheduled on Thursday, when all sixteen are in the field. Assignments include referrals from the Housing Authority of New Orleans, the public school system, satellite mental health clinics, city neighborhood health clinics, OEO funded center and neighborhood programs, the Department of Public Welfare, the Council on Aging, and similar agencies providing services in the neighborhood.

For their community focus, the students were assigned to staff the office of newly-elected State Representative Dorothy

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[2] W. L. Kindelsperger and Helen Cassidy, *Social Work Training Centers: Tentative Analysis of the Structure and Learning Environment* (New Orleans: Tulane University School of Social Work, 1966).

Taylor, the only Black woman ever elected to the Louisiana State Legislature. Representative Taylor is indigenous to the neighborhood, has a long record of volunteer service to her community, and is known city-wide for her advocacy on behalf of low-income residents. The students were assigned to her office in September 1971. The training center instructor had known Representative Taylor since 1964 when both had worked together in a variety of OEO funded programs in Central City, and this long association facilitated the placement of students in her office.

RATIONALE

Neighborhood-based community organization practice is a full-time assignment if the community organizer is to be effective in developing visibility, establishing trust, and understanding the real needs and concerns of the community. When a sense of community is lacking, the task of the community organizer is made more difficult. It is clearly evident that the type of exposure necessary for students to discern community problems, needs, and concerns, and to establish visibility cannot be attained in the two-day field experience, since it also involves direct service responsibilities. If community organization and planning experience is to be brought up to parity with direct service assignments in the generic first year, some means of acquiring the knowledge and sanction must be found. Our experience with student placement in a legislative neighborhood-based office demonstrates that the legislator provides both the sanction for community assignments and the unique understanding of neighborhood that only a resident could acquire.

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE EXPERIENCES

Students who had a major interest in community organization practice were appointed to staff Representative Taylor's office during the academic year 1971-72. Representative Taylor was in the process of establishing her office, which was to be staffed entirely by volunteers. The students, therefore, became her staff and were charged with the responsibility of setting up the office, including general office procedures, filing system, management techniques, and procedures for facilitating constituent access to their elected representative. As part of this task, the students and this instructor visited the office of United States Congressman Hale Boggs to determine whether his office procedures might be adaptable to the needs and constraints of a neighborhood-based, volunteer-staffed legislative office. A modified, scaled-down version of Congressman Boggs' system was implemented, with the addition of a daily log sheet to document problems, issues, and unmet needs for follow-up by Representative Taylor and/or social work students.

Shortly after her election Representative Taylor became involved extensively in prison reform, which catapulted her into national prominence and necessitated extensive travel and hence absence from her office most of the time. At the time of this program a gubernatorial election was in process in Louisiana, along with Representative Taylor's own bid for reelection. Previously, she had been successful in a court suit to reapportion the state legislature along lines fair to Black residents throughout the state. As a result, Representative Taylor and seven other Black candidates were elected to full terms in the Louisiana State Legislature. She was heavily involved in all of these campaigns, thus lessening her availability to students and placing an increasing responsibility on them for the productivity and effectiveness of her office.

When the gubernatorial candidate supported by Representative Taylor was ultimately elected in a very close campaign, he quickly appointed her to a key legislative post – that of Chairman of the Legislative Committee on Health and Welfare. This committee was charged with the responsibility for all legislation concerning statewide correctional institutions, welfare programs, mental hospitals, community mental health centers, and physical and mental health programs.

Students assigned to Representative Taylor found themselves quickly pressed into service as research assistants. The state legislature, as in most states, does not provide research help for its legislators. Representative Taylor had to make increasing demands on the students to do research on basic issues that would come before her committee or that pertained to bills she planned to introduce in the 1972 summer session. Students, therefore, found themselves involved in researching prison reform (including Louisiana statutes and model legislation from other states and the federal government); consumer protection problems and needs; recommendations for needed consumer legislation; and welfare reform, especially in areas where state action could be taken to effect change in a highly complex and interlocking state-federal program. In addition, students wrote speeches, answered letters, represented the legislator's office at legislative committee hearings and community meetings, and acted as liaison between Representative Taylor and her constituency. It was the liaison activity that increasingly brought every conceivable kind of problem to her office. While staffing Representative Taylor's office, students were in effect acting as storefront, crisis-oriented service givers in traditional social work roles.

Because of their diligence, interest, and demonstrated adherence to confidentiality, Representative Taylor entrusted students with political information that served to enhance their learning about legislative and political processes, and the formation of public policy. As a result of the research assignments, in which all sixteen students engaged, some fifteen pieces of legislative proposals ultimately emerged and were introduced into the regular session of the 1972 legislature.[3] The students thus received actual experience in public policy formation.

Because of the demands made on Representative Taylor at the local and national levels, students worked overtime, spending seemingly endless hours to meet her needs. It is apparent that they could not have made the contributions they did without this overtime effort; that a small block of time from a two-day field placement would not have answered the need. That none of the students complained about the overtime they invested is a tribute to Representative Taylor and evidence of the satisfaction they gained from her acceptance of them and the vital role they played.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

There were many problems encountered during the first year, not the least of which was the unavailability of Representative Taylor. The faculty field instructor was confronted with a number of serious and exigent issues related to the students' responsibilities. These additional concerns of a specialized nature were superimposed on the already demanding role of social work educator to a large group of students. These issues concerned, for example, the complexity of the legislative processes, and the necessity for research into areas requiring some legal background. Additionally, the demands from the community on Representative Taylor were so great that students were frequently assigned to tasks without the knowledge of the instructor, who then found it difficult to be as helpful as desirable.

Weekly staff meetings were held with the students in an attempt to maintain communication and resolve problems as they arose, but this plan was not always successful. The students also kept daily log sheets of their activities, which were turned into the instructor weekly; but again, these served only to alert the instructor to the assignments after the fact. Representative Taylor was always generous with her time when she was available, so that some of the problems were ironed out along the way, but in too many instances this was not possible and the students continued to be involved in tasks that were not appropriate to their learning needs, such as handling correspondence, typing letters, and other clerical tasks.[4] Without the performance of these tasks, however, the office would not have functioned. Also, the students were willing to continue these clerical assignments, recognizing them for what they were and seeing them as vehicles for involvement in more productive activities.

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[3] Verbal report by Gary A. Lloyd, chairman of the Tulane University School of Social Work community organization sequence.

ADVOCACY

One of the major contributions made by the students during their placement in Representative Taylor's office was to document unmet need. A daily log sheet was kept of every contact, along with the action taken. If agencies were not responsive to the needs of Representative Taylor's constituents, this documentation provided a record of their failure to do so. As a result, she could act as advocate on behalf of large groups of her constituents when necessary to ensure access to available resources. Based partly on the problems and issues identified by this documentation, Representative Taylor, in her second year in office, initiated precinct-level advisory and action groups to identify concerns, establish priorities, and make recommendations for legislation as necessary. Students carried the major responsibility for these precinct-level activities.

CLASSROOM LINKAGE

In an effort to maximize the learning experiences of the students in the field, periodic consultations between the training center instructor and classroom faculty were held as field and class assignments converged in social policy, Black studies, knowledge building, and research practicum. Through this linkage between class and field, students in a social policy class, for example, could devote their policy research to actual legislative needs for the state of Louisiana. Research practica were developed from the field research on selected issues of concern to Representative Taylor. In some instances, these resulted in position papers and/or legislative proposals.

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[4] The 1972 Louisiana State Legislature passed an act that now provides for salaries of clerical personnel and office rent for legislators, which should alleviate this problem.

Toward the end of the first year, students in a second training center became involved with another newly-elected Black state legislator, and the students assigned to Representative Taylor were able to give consultation to this second group in developing and staffing their office.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

By the end of the first year of experience in the low-income, neighborhood-based state legislative office, the areas of assignments, learning objectives, and methodologies shown in the table on the next page were identified.

It is clearly apparent in analyzing the learning objectives that these are entirely consistent with traditional social work education and practice. What is different and unique in this experience, however, is the real linkage for students between classroom analysis and study of public policy and direct influence on policy formation through their role in developing legislation. These experiences also bring community organization and planning learning experiences up to parity with the direct service modalities and methods.

The Tulane University School of Social Work generic social work first-year field instruction program, therefore, teaches the student core concepts in which the social worker is viewed as a change agent equipped to intervene at several entry points in a client system by utilizing appropriate methodology based on assessment of the situation and purpose of the intervention. The concept of advocacy is enlarged to include political advocacy, or, if you will, lobbying on behalf of client populations.

Analytic skills are stressed throughout all of these assignments and apply to all client systems, whether individual, family, small group, neighborhood, or community. The expectation is that students in this type of generic social work sequence will perceive direct service and social action as mutually complementary and appropriate, and essential to the social work practice of the future.

TABLE 1
The Role and Learning Expectations for the First-Year Student in the Office of the State Legislator

Assignment	Learning Objectives	Methodology
1. Office Staffing		
a. Managerial – management, administration b. Service delivery to clients: (1) New patterns – storefront, neighborhood-centered (2) Crisis intervention – individual, family, small group (3) Crisis theory (4) Information and referral (5) Advocacy, ombudsman (6) Broker (7) Data collection – knowledge building	1. Relationship skills 2. Interview techniques 3. Differential use of self 4. Expanded role concept – nontraditional setting 5. Management and administration skills 6. Assessment, analytic skills	1. Casework 2. Groupwork 3. Research
c. Service delivery to community: (1) Determination of need – data collection, knowledge building (2) Resource and service development (3) Advocacy (4) Information and referral (5) Group leadership – committees, task groups, constituents	1. Analytic skills 2. Planning skills 3. Group leadership skills	1. Groupwork 2. Community organization 3. Research
2. Legislative Aide		
a. Representation at committees, hearings, etc. b. Liaison between legislator and constituents c. Constituent organization d. Research – data collection e. Policy analysis and development f. Legislative analysis and proposals g. Education of legislator re social work expertise, contribution, role	1. Use of self 2. Analytic skills 3. Policy and planning 4. Legislative, political processes 5. Group leadership skills	1. Community organization and planning
3. Research		
a. Data collection – information bank b. Need identification c. Planning d. Policy analysis e. Legislative recommendations f. Position papers	1. Analytic skills – sources and types of data 2. Policy formulation 3. Planning skills 4. Knowledge building	1. Research 2. Community organization

Help Line: An Integrated Field-Research Learning Experience

by Dorothy E. Moore

This purpose of this paper is to invite discussion of the learning opportunities offered by a specific demonstration-research project that was undertaken as a requirement of the field and the research curriculum at the Dalhousie University Maritime School of Social Work. The project's unique educational component was the multidimensional nature of its learning experiences that related to all areas of the school's curriculum. It required students to draw on different types of social work methods in order to create a single, self-contained operation. The project afforded an opportunity for one variety of research experience within a wide range of possibilities.

SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH

At present, various factors appear to favor an increased use of research in social work. In addition to the introduction of more sophisticated research techniques, there are more students applying for graduate study who already have been exposed to a considerable amount of research methodology and statistics in undergraduate courses, especially in sociology. This is true for the Maritime School of Social Work, at least. The presence of such students presents the opportunity to introduce variety and a greater degree of choice into the research curriculum; for instance, the more advanced students can be encouraged to undertake research projects of their own, while others may choose another specialty that relieves them of research activities.

This paper was originally presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work held in June 1972.

Dorothy E. Moore is an assistant professor at the Dalhousie University Maritime School of Social Work. She is currently on educational leave as a doctoral student at Boston University.

This contrasts with the situation that prevailed until very recently when all students were required to take part in the production of a research project in the final year of the master's program. Most of these students had little or no acquaintance with research at the undergraduate level and were able to absorb only a smattering of research procedures in one year. This ill-equipped them for the task of research production in the final year. This system seems to have produced the opposite of what was intended; that is, students devoted much time and effort to the production of relatively unsophisticated research studies in which they were not really interested and which they considered irrelevant. The experience was so painful for many that they acquired a revulsion for the word "research." This boded ill for their future appreciation of its stance in their social work practice, once they had fulfilled the thesis requirements for the master's degree.

The research experience was not only of dubious value to some graduate students, but many of the agencies in which the exercise was carried out had witnessed similar projects over the years and found few that produced conclusive results which could be usefully implemented in the agency setting. This view of the negative aspects of past student research is a gloomy one that others may challenge. It is only raised here because the need for adequate social work research has become increasingly urgent for the profession. Ways must be found for making the research viewpoint not only demonstrably relevant to problem-solving endeavors, but an integral part of learning. If more social work professionals can be "turned on" to the scientific viewpoint instead of "turned off" during their student experiences, more of them will go on to ask questions and supply valid answers about problem intervention. The profession needs this in order to develop more effectively.

INTEGRATED LEARNING

The adoption of a concentration model at the Maritime School involved shifts in all parts of the curriculum in order to supply integrated learning opportunities from the various courses that focus on the available fields of concentration. The drive to integrate learning for this reason harmonizes very well with the general need to produce more scientifically oriented social workers.

THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

This paper explores the establishment of a new social service by students that is an example of integrated learning. The service in question was Help Line, a telephone crisis intervention service that now serves the Halifax-Dartmouth area. This was originally initiated as a pilot project sponsored by the Welfare Council and manned by social work graduate students with the help of volunteer professional workers. The response indicated a need for such a service and so the following year a group of four students decided to establish a permanent service, drawing on the experiences of the earlier experiment. A legacy of the initial venture was the creation of an interim Crisis Services Board set up to discuss ways and means of establishing a more comprehensive service. The board accepted the proposition by the group of students to inaugurate an expanded version of the service. They also hired the students' field instructor from the school as a part-time consultant to coordinate the venture and to suggest means of financing a permanent service.

Inception of the Project

The Help Line service became the final-year field placement for these students. It operated from a donated office in the student union building for twenty-four hours a day, and was staffed initially by volunteer faculty and students from the Maritime School, students from the Nova Scotia Institute of Technology, and agency social workers and counselors who volunteered their leisure time. Each volunteer was committed to one shift every four weeks, with two volunteers on duty every night and on weekends. The office was equipped with two telephones, cots, coffee-making facilities, and an array of sources of information. In addition, a group of about twenty "resource persons" was organized to provide on-the-spot crisis intervention in serious situations, or consultation to volunteers. Financial assistance was nonexistent during the early months of operation. Telephone service was donated by the telephone company and publicity was donated by newspapers, radio, and television. Over the first six months the number of callers to Help Line rose from 200 to approximately 600 per month. Volunteers supplied information, on-the-spot counseling, or referral to an appropriate social agency.

During these months it became evident that many of the volunteer professionals would be unable to continue indefinitely. The students therefore initiated a recruitment program to obtain suitable volunteers from the community-at-large, and screened and trained these volunteers. Armed with evidence from their completed evaluation study, they and their field instructor convinced the Crisis Services Board that the service was fulfilling a needed function and that a permanent board should be set up with authority to raise funds and to appoint a salaried coordinator. Subsequently, one of the students was hired in this capacity after she graduated. The board experienced difficulties in securing funds of an ongoing nature, but it finally secured the major portion of its budget from various governmental agencies. The service is an independent one, although its board members represent a variety of local agencies. It is thus located within the social service network.

These, then, are the bare bones of the project that the students operationalized. But what went into its creation? What guided the decisions they made that ensured the project's survival once they had graduated? Obviously, a combination of skills and various kinds of knowledge went into the operation.

The Detached Student Unit

These students constituted the first "detached unit" based at the school for their field placement rather than in one of the existing agencies. The rationale for this was that it would afford an opportunity for students especially interested in innovation and social action to be creative and take responsibility. One notices immediately that these very qualities are the ones that are useful to the researcher.

Direct Service

The students initially saw themselves as highly task-oriented, that task being to improve on the delivery of direct service to the community. It was only after they had become involved in organizing the service that they were able to recognize that evaluative research was essential to the long-term effectiveness of the service.

At this point they also realized that they had already implemented the first steps of the research cycle (exploration and assessment of an existing situation) as an integral part of planning and inaugurating service. Moreover, the organizing, facilitative, and research tasks were so interwoven that they were complementary to each other in the initial stages. It was at this point that the decision to formalize the research component was made, and the students planned to evaluate the use made of the service over a set period of time. One question that troubled the students at this point concerned their ability to be objective and impartial about evaluating the service, since they had already convinced themselves of its value and had become emotionally involved in its success. But they knew that objectivity was an essential ingredient to all professional social work. As they proceeded with the dual tasks of coordination and evaluation it became increasingly clear that the conceptual skills of the research procedure involved a social work method that contributed greatly to their efficiency in the other tasks of practical organization and personal communication.

Relationship Skills

Similarly, the successful completion of their research task required the contribution of relationship skills in ensuring the willing cooperation of those who staffed the service so that accurate data could be collected. Classroom learning from several areas of the curriculum was thus synthesized in this practice situation.

Use of Theory

Content related to social service structure, administration and supervision, human behavior, communication and relationship skills and the analytic skills typical of research methodology were drawn upon and blended with the use of community resources for the single goal of establishing an effective service.

EVALUATION OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Task and Skill Integration

The social work students' "clients" in this situation consisted of professional colleagues in agencies and committees, news media personnel (and through them the general public), and the volunteers. Problem solving consisted of supplying an effective service to fulfill a need. Analyzing the need and providing a suitable remedy required a scientific orientation to the process just as much as it required good service skills. The service and research aspects of the model frequently were not separate entities but facets of the overall process.

If the project had been pursued solely as the reactivation of a former short-term experiment in order to continue providing this kind of service, organizational and communication skills and tasks would have sufficed. But the incorporation of research skills and tasks provided a basis for learning from the experiences of other services elsewhere, for appraising the experiences of the pilot project, and for developing the service after its initiation on the basis of gathered evidence. This added a valuable dimension to the project since the service could grow, and its direction of growth could be ascertained with confidence that it was relevant to demonstrated need. The students thus were able to create and deliver service on the one hand, and to evaluate its utilization on the other. Combined roles produced effective service and coordination.

Direct Practice

But if practice in the field has benefitted from the contribution of research, research has also benefitted by being located in the field as an essential component of practice. Social work research cannot be done in a laboratory or in a vacuum. The research student is expected to detect an area of concern in which there are uncertainties that can be resolved by research and to formulate the problem in researchable terms. In order to do this he needs to familiarize himself with social problems and the agencies that attempt to deal with them. He also needs to develop a high degree of motivation, curiosity, creativity, and ability to work independently. In successfully collecting data that will be accurate, relevant, and complete, the researcher must achieve the cooperation of other persons whether they be colleagues, clients, or respondents. It is therefore essential for him to develop interpersonal skills in order to shape and carry out research in the field for which he can take responsibility at every stage. The present project afforded ample opportunity for developing all of these characteristics.

Research Experience

The research experience of this group of students differed from that of students in an agency. When there is an established structure and a program already in operation research projects often are of a retrospective nature or are concerned with the appraisal of only one aspect of the total service; sometimes they are exploratory and seek relationships between variables. Conclusions of such theses relate only to the small segment of the total situation under investigation, and it is not possible to recommend actions that may have implications for aspects of the service not studied.

The research experience in this demonstration project was multidimensional. It was exploratory in the sense that it was used to assess the essential features of the type of service envisaged and its relevance for a particular location; it was evaluative in the sense that it was used to assess the use made of the service once it was launched; it was descriptive in that it was used after a period of service to describe what happened from the beginning so that the whole process could be captured for future reference. Another feature of the research experience was that it was used to create and plan a complete service out of nothing, so that researched material was implemented at various stages before the research task itself was completed.

In evaluating the project the research design and instrument (data schedule) had to be invented. Once the data was analyzed, it gave a comprehensive view of the nature of calls to Help Line, who was making them and when, and the kinds of service rendered. On the basis of this information and their own organizing experience it was possible for the students to go beyond the conclusions of their thesis and recommend appropriate adjustments in service. The information was also valuable in providing validation of the service's activities and demonstrating the need for it to other agencies, government officials approached for funding, and other relevant members of the community.

Research experience of this type provides both advantages and disadvantages to the students when it is compared with the typical experience in an established agency. The most obvious advantage was the gratification presented by the immediacy of the validating procedure. An obvious disadvantage was the fluidity of the situation, which made unusually heavy demands on the creativity and adaptability of the students.

Total Experience

The total experience of this project could be said to be greater than the sum of its parts. It is probable that the students emerged with a more scientific orientation to social work practice than if their research experience had taken its more traditional academic form, as a frill rather than a basic ingredient of practice. The experience enabled them to take a more objective, detached view of their newly created service, to locate it in relation to other services, and to assess its value. The necessity for critical appraisal helped them become self-aware and self-disciplined, and helped them set realistic goals. There was also a great sense of responsibility, achievement, and reward, because the total experience was genuine and not simply a training exercise.

None of the four students planned to specialize in social work research. After graduation, one became the coordinator of the service described and the other three were employed in traditional social service agencies. However, one of them acted as a consultant to help set up a similar service in another province of Canada. This project was used as a learning experience during the last year before the school's curriculum was remodelled to include concentrations. But the experience involved in this type of project is still considered appropriate for research concentration students in the revised curriculum.

Supervision

This demonstration project afforded a combined field placement for students to exercise both direct service and research skills, since it was rich in opportunities for communication, problem solving, and testing assumptions. The students were aided in their decisions by separate field and research instructors. The instructors maintained liaison between themselves in order to keep an overall view of the project. The field instructor was a part-time employee and worked exclusively with the students in this field placement. She had special experience in groupwork and her teaching and evaluation of the students was concerned not only with their organizational prowess but with their ability to work together as a group. She also appreciated the value of research and encouraged its use. The field instructor thus took the major responsibility for management of the project.

The research instructor's role was to aid the students in identifying the place of research within the project and to give instruction on research methodology and writing the thesis. She also assisted in "making connections," such as the use of interpersonal skills in research tasks; however, her time was limited since she had similar responsibilities for four other groups of students. This tended to restrict her teaching and evaluation to the task of completing the research study and the quality of the finished product.

The shared responsibility for supervision had advantages for the students in that they had access to the expertise of more faculty members. They also found it easier to distinguish their own roles. But integration of learning might better be achieved when one faculty person acts as both field and research instructor and helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and field experience.

Community Aspects

While models may differ, demonstration projects appear to offer benefits other than the enrichment of learning opportunities for students. They offer a useful link between the school of social work and the professional community, since the school picks up and nurtures a new service. When the project has been brought along to a safe survival level and its value established, it can legitimately be made a responsibility of the professional community. The community at large also benefits if the project proves to be a success, since it gains a new social service.

Hazards

Demonstration projects involve hazards as well as benefits. The student foregoes the security of an ongoing agency in which he is free to learn at a slower pace and to a certain extent to choose.

The student in a detached unit that is creating its own field experience is bereft of the support of professional coworkers engaged in the delivery of a legitimated service that is usually adequately financed. Before the student has completed his training he has to take responsibility and solve urgent administrative and planning problems in addition to devising effective service techniques. He has to feel free to fail in the venture without drastic results if he is not to become immobilized in the situation. Obviously, then, the detached unit is not suitable for all students; it appears especially suited to those who are interested in social innovation, who have organizing and conceptual abilities, and who are both independent and creative.

Factors in the Success of the Project

The project discussed here was fortunate to have had a group of students who possessed a large share of the qualities mentioned. They also possessed exceptional energy and so were able to cope with the great amount of time that coordination of the service required. However, these four students were not exceptional in ability. They were all young and had little experience, although they all had performed well during their first-year of field experience. Perhaps they could be considered exceptional in the degree to which they liked to work independently; and, given the opportunity to do this, they rose to the challenge. This does does not imply that they were unique. Many social work students have such potential and are not offered appropriate opportunities to develop it.

In addition to the students' contribution, other factors were involved in the success of the project. First, there was its timeliness, since an initial short-term experiment had already provoked the interest of professionals and public alike. Second, there was the nature of the project. Public ignorance of the services offered by the regular agencies and the possible existence of gaps in service had been suspected for some time, and it was felt that this project might become a source of information and coordination. One factor that might have increased the effectiveness of the project would have been the greater participation and material support of interested agencies in order to initiate the service, even if the amount of this would have been modest. This probably would have alleviated subsequent difficulties in getting the service financed. Also, the research function of the operation could have been designed and emphasized beforehand so that it might have been possible to obtain research funding. The project then might have attracted students with a special interest in research.

FUTURE POTENTIAL

The establishment of the particular service discussed here offers ongoing opportunities for student participation once the initiating group has graduated. As always, research results raise further questions that require exploration. For instance, what are the ramifications of the project within the social service network? Do clients perceive it as an effective problem-solving agency? and so on. The service can also provide field experience for later students. It will no longer be of such an innovative nature but it can still provide useful experience in direct counselling to clients, in the training of volunteers, in administration, and in the traditional liaison between professionals and agencies. Once it is institutionalized, the service takes its place among others as a possible training ground for students. But in its initial stages, a demonstration project is especially rich in opportunities for a variety of learning experiences. It is also ideal as a situation for evaluative research.

Creative Social Work Education: A Student-Designed Practicum

by Peter Strubel & Mary Hutton

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In the spring of 1970 the faculty of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work decided that the school's curriculum would be structured around areas of concentration chosen by the student and that every attempt would be made to allow for individualization of the student's program according to his interests and talents. Students had been pushing for this kind of arrangement for a number of years, particularly in relation to practice placements. Thus it is hardly surprising that along with the move to individualize the students' programs the school adopted a completely new and thoroughly democratic decision-making process in relation to policy formulation.

Within the limits of administrative feasibility all policy making is now vested in three standing committees: the Educational Policies Committee, the Student Resources Committee, and the Learning Resources Committee. The student who describes his practicum experience in this paper was chosen by the students to be one of the student members of the Learning Resources Committee and was subsequently elected by that committee to serve as its chairman.

After the basic changes made in the spring of 1970 it was inevitable that the next move could only be toward the more complete involvement in academic matters of students and faculty acting as a unit. Thus we began to act together to move our school forward. We think our beginning has shown some progress and holds promise of much more.

Peter Strubel is a staff development specialist for the Pueblo County Department of Public Welfare, Colorado. Mary Hutton is director of the Learning Resources Center at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work and was Mr. Strubel's advisor during his second year at the school. She authored the first part of this paper.

After an orientation period that exposes the student to basic social work practice principles, an overview of current social work issues and concerns, and a review of the available study opportunities, he chooses an area of concentration. At this time he also specifies his learning objectives and chooses an educational adviser. Mastery of certain basic content is still required of all students, of course, but beyond that a student selects classes and practica experiences in line with his special field of interest. A joint degree program with law, architecture, and guidance and counseling has served as an opening wedge for increased possibilities of academic work within the university. Practica alignments with universities in other areas of the country and abroad have opened up new areas of field experiences as well.

By individualizing the curriculum we have not only enlarged and enriched it, but have made it more complex in terms of communication and control. Handling this complexity in a way that will make the curriculum educationally viable is the major problem we face. We have developed an interactive system that is organized around a dynamic communications system. In any attempt to provide self-management of a system, the degree of individualization and specialization of its parts must be considered not only as an impetus to creativity but as a contribution to increased complexity and interaction. Increased data input is accompanied by increased need for intersystem communications. A strengthened information-linkage support system then becomes essential.

The Learning Resources Center attempted to provide this kind of information support and development. A greatly increased proliferation of lines of study and the explication of innumerable parameters of overlap were the result of the new student independence. The information explosion demands not only increased proficiency in interdisciplinary communications, but increased skill in intradisciplinary communications.

Rapid production of increasingly large numbers of new parts of an educational system also means a new arrangement between teacher and student. Both are being called on to acquire and develop knowledge together. The process then becomes a joint inquiry rather than a didactic presentation by one to the other. By freeing the students for this kind of inquiry we also free the faculty. It is the business of the Learning Resources Center to acquire the resources that will allow this to take place. This means we must acquire the technological devices needed to serve as teaching aids and also develop the program content to use them. But much of the hardware already developed is beyond our financial means and the software – the programming of the content we require for the machines – is virtually nonexistent for social work.

Given the above circumstances, a unique educational experiment was undertaken. A second-year master's student elected to have his practicum with the Learning Resources Center. The rest of this paper is a description and assessment by him of his learning experiences with the center.

PROPOSING A COURSE OF STUDY

My interest in social work has always been combined with an interest in communications. My educational goal in entering the master's degree program was to further my knowledge about and skill in communicating with others – clients, community groups, and so on. My past experience in public welfare, as a juvenile parole officer and as an art teacher led me toward the field of staff development. It was readily apparent to me that social work practitioners made little use of multimedia communications techniques to reach their clients or groups important to their clients. After entering school I realized that such techniques were only beginning to be explored by professional social work educators, in spite of the fact that it had been well established that the use of differential sensory receptors in the acquisition of information aids in both the understanding and retention of information by the receiver.

The Learning Resources Center, whose purpose was not only to acquire but to develop learning resources for faculty and students along a wide range of social work interests, provided an opportunity for me to engage in the kind of practicum experience that would most nearly meet my educational requirements. Although the center had not been envisaged as a practicum possibility when it was set up, I submitted a written proposal of my learning objectives that met the formal requirements of the practicum. It was approved by both the center director and my educational adviser.

The basic content of my proposal covered three areas: (1) audiovisual learning experiences, (2) learning experiences in staff development, and (3) learning experiences in public relations. In the audiovisual area my intent was to explore the use of such media as television, motion pictures, tape recorders, opaque projectors, radio, and so on as possible social work tools, not only in teaching communities and individuals but as effective classroom tools. In the staff development area I was interested in learning how to provide consultation and serve as a referral source for students and faculty who wished to present programs using media with which they were unfamiliar, or who needed audio or visual supports developed for presentations either in the classroom or to an outside group. In the field of public relations I wanted to explore the use of audiovisual aids in the recruitment procedures that the school undertook each year. All three facets of this proposal were in line with my intention of gaining expertise in staff development techniques.

THE PROJECTS

Focusing on these areas, I undertook a number of tasks. One of the first was to design a workshop that would instruct students and faculty how to operate audiovisual equipment. The workshop was staged as a self-teaching laboratory with the equipment set up on a long table and posters describing the operation of each piece of equipment on the wall behind it. I was available to help those who were interested in learning how to use the equipment.

Although the workshop was adequately advertised and a good many students came in, only three faculty members showed up. I later put out an illustrated brochure for the faculty describing how to operate the equipment, but at the end of the year I was still receiving numerous requests from faculty to run projectors, tape recorders, and so on. My instructor and I could not decide why this project was so poorly received. Was I starting too soon, as a student, to teach something to faculty members? Or was it that our new curriculum had resulted in a great many more traditional work demands on instructors by individual students?

My second project was a sound and slide presentation to be used in the classroom, before community groups, and for recruitment purposes. The subject was, "What is Social Work?" The show was a capsulization of notes of a one-year, basic social work practice course. The presentation lasted seventeen minutes and was structured to provide an overview of the course. It was hoped that parts of it would be helpful throughout the course and that it could also be used at the end of the course as a content summary. The program was viewed by many students and some faculty, and was used in an undergraduate program at another university. It was also used for recruitment purposes and by interested community groups.

As I worked on setting up the course visually I felt alternately like a surgeon and a Chinese war lord. In one area I would be carefully dissecting and highlighting a piece of the essential information and in the next I would be cutting a wide swath through nonessential verbiage. The program was divided into three basic parts: (1) background on what social work has been in the past and what it is now, (2) an account of the steps in the social work process. and (3) a description of the five basic social work roles taught in the course. The visual section of the show was done in a very open, cartoon manner. As an artist I was aware that the more simple and powerful the drawing, the more evocative it would be and the longer it would be remembered the viewer. Considerable pains were taken to select someone with a good voice to record the audio tape that accompanied the slides.

The third major project for the year was a combined classroom and practicum assignment. It consisted of a mid-year analysis of communications within the school and an analysis of the decision-making process. To present this visually a series of transparent overlay charts were developed. These charts were useful not only in the particular class for which they were developed, but as teaching tools in other classes as well.

The fourth project, which took me through the first semester, was the development of a social work history time line, based on the book *Heritage of American Social Work.*[1] It was developed in five separate segments: a general historical index, the specific historical periods, groups of decades, periods of social action, and the development of organizations. The time line was visualized as a single unit visual presentation some eighteen feet long. It began with the year 1601 and continued to 1900. Again, the hardest part of the development was the extraction from conceptual material of central themes that could be given visual, concrete representation. I decided to limit the scope of the time line. It was not designed to answer questions, but to raise some in relation to current issues and concerns. The visual presentation of repeated unsuccessful attempts to solve a certain social problem lent the material a dramatic impact.

Each one of the time line segments was photographed and made into a separate slide show. Thus students interested in a certain segment – social welfare organizations, for instance – could use the slides to see at a glance the development of these organizations from their beginnings to 1900.

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[1] Ralph E. Pumphrey and Muriel W. Pumphrey, eds., *Heritage of American Social Work: Readings in Its Philosophical and Institutional Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

THE SECOND SEMESTER

The second semester took me into the community, into the grant writing business, and into the classroom as a teacher. As I mentioned previously, the lack of software programs is only one of the things that has mitigated against the use of audiovisual aids in social work practice and education. The prohibitive cost of some of the equipment is another. A simple, inexpensive self-teaching device was designed and a tentative grant proposal for its development outlined. Plans for the learning device are still under study.

Another proposal was to develop a visual journal of social welfare problems in the Southwest. It was to be distributed to schools of social work in the East, in an attempt to bring the problems of the American Indian and the Chicano to their attention. A pilot study was financed through the Learning Resources Center. If adequate funds can be found, the journal will be published every three months in the form of a slide show with sound accompaniment and distributed on a subscription basis.

The third proposal I attempted to develop was to inaugurate a Community Communications Center that would function primarily as an audiovisual center for the use of people in poverty areas. There they could be exposed to basic information on health, education, and welfare programs that vitally affect them and could learn techniques to reach policy and program makers in both the public and private sector. It was felt that the center would also provide an interesting and experimental practicum for social work students.

During the second semester I also had a number of teaching and consulting jobs. I developed a brochure for a nonprofit, resident-directed neighborhood housing authority in the inner city. I developed a slide show for the Narcotics Service Council and worked on another slide show for recruitment purposes. I conducted the slide shows for an undergraduate course in social welfare at the University of Missouri, and cotaught a class in the Social Worker as a Trainer with one of our own instructors. I was commissioned by another of our instructors to prepare a slide show for his course in marital counseling and responded to requests for the preparation of graphics, transparencies, and so on, as well as the presentation of their content from a number of other classes at our school. I also videotaped interviews for the class in marital counseling.

Throughout the year I had the stimulating experience of working with students interested in the center who volunteered their time and talent. Of particular interest to me was my work with a fellow student who took an independent study course for credit with the center. I was given the responsibility for supervising his field teaching of the use of audiovisual aids in social work practice.

Throughout the year I was involved in a film series sponsored by the human behavior and practice faculty of our school, which was a success. I served in varying capacities – from projectionist and errand boy to consultant in the selection of pictures to be shown.

I cannot end a description of my various projects without noting that I became generally known, and much called upon, as a fix-it man. When a piece of equipment didn't work (whether it was the videotape or a small recorder) the first cry was always, "Where's Pete?" In spite of my practicum instructor's attempts to protect me from this, the demands in this area were heavy.

One of the most interesting experiences of this practicum was the "political" aspect of my position At the beginning of the year certain students and faculty members seemed to alternate between the suspicion that I was a spy for the student body or a sell-out to the faculty. For the most part these feelings were quickly dispelled and I was called on by students for ideas and technical assistance in making class presentations or for help in reaching difficult clients or agency personnel in their practica.

In one instance this led to the creation of a game that presented alternative solutions to client problems. Although the solutions arose purely by chance, the answers were designed to provoke thought and discussion of the problems being considered. The game was pretested on the members of the class I cotaught and seemed to be sufficiently effective to warrant its being copyrighted. It also led to an invitation to act as a games developer and consultant from an outside agency.

The faculty who had first seemed uneasy with my presence five days a week when I "should have been out in the field," were soon asking me to share teaching responsibilities. One faculty member agreed to buy photographic equipment needed by the center in exchange for the development of some needed visual teaching materials. Almost all the faculty seemed interested in what I was doing and were helpful with suggestions. There were more requests for my time than I could meet.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the year I had a chance to practice various social work roles and to develop my particular expertise in the area of multimedia communications. Most important, I felt I had broken ground for the challenging task of translating previously untranslated social work content into media that could prove more economical and effective in reaching social work students, practitioners, and those with whom they work.

The year was educationally broadening. My role with the National Federation of Student Social Workers was somewhat altered, since I was now able to see issues not only from the student's point of view but also from the instructor's. On the other hand, because of my closeness to the faculty, I was sometimes called on to act as a student advocate. I served as chairman of the Learning Resources Committee and was also elected to be a member of the Student Executive Board. In this latter capacity I was appointed to serve as the student liaison between faculty and students. This meant I attended and participated in all faculty meetings except those held in executive session. The experience of filling both student and faculty roles had some disadvantages, but it also had some advantages. From my dual position I emerged with a familiarity about the outlooks and goals of both faculty and students.

The practicum placement was, of course, an invaluable experience for me in terms of my concern with the field of communications within the social work and social welfare arenas. A good deal of my time was spent in idea generation and exploration. Many ideas were discarded almost as quickly as they were generated, but it was stimulating to be connected with the work of a new and integral part of the school, and one that holds so much potential.

We moved in the first year of the center's existence from a unit of limited scope to a larger-scoped unit that showed promise of being limited only by the imagination and finances we could acquire. I found time to be alternately a very good friend and an impossible enemy. During the development of most slide shows I began work at 7:00 A.M. and continued until 5:00 or 5:30 P.M. Doing this seven days a week is not impossible, but after three or four weeks I had to take a day or two off.

The educational venture was deemed a success by the school. I gained knowledge and skill in an area of social work education that was not available in any other practicum. My area of interest was broadened. Now I want to use what I have learned in the area of multimedia communication to improve the field of social work education itself. Social workers, being primarily communicators, need to be specialists in this field. They need to become familiar with and make use of everything they can that will help them communicate effectively with others. Communication is not truncated at the verbal level. Education for social work practice must not be either.

The Practice Seminar in Social Work Education

by J.K. Mark Williams

Although social work practitioners and educators have developed a body of knowledge and skill pertaining to work with groups, the potential application to teaching methodologies and learning engagements in social work education has not always been realized. Perhaps this has been discouraged by groupwork's frequent orientation toward "treatment" of the client system, which is inappropriate to the classroom setting. However, the dynamics of groups at work (ranging from group therapy to task-oriented groups) display common elements useful to the teacher in the classroom. The study of the characteristics, processes, and direction of group life in the social work seminar may serve to relate key concepts of small group theory to this mode of instruction, and to extend any new understanding to other components of the social work curriculum.

THE SEMINAR – ITS USES

The original meaning of the Latin term *seminare* – to seed – perhaps best conveys the intent of the seminar: a human exchange aimed at planting and hatching ideas that garner thought. As a form of class organization, it has never been very well defined. In higher education it is often associated with students engaged in research and advanced studies supervised by faculty for discussion of problems of mutual interest.[1] Seminars are often viewed as potentially "cooperative" groups with all the attendant assets set forth by small group theorists, namely, the enhancement of individual learning, the opportunities for social leadership and

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[1] Lee C. Deighton, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Education*, Vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 543.

J. K. Mark Williams is an assistant professor in the Department of Community Development, Livingstone College, Rutgers University.

organization, the integration of intellectual and emotional learning, the encouragement and use of new understanding, and perhaps most importantly, the strengthening of humanistic values and effectiveness in interpersonal relations.

The underlying assumption of the teaching methodology is that the transaction between learner and teacher and learner and learner should emphasize problem-centered learning as the most conducive to the building of substantial knowledge, to the fostering of exploratory and inventive dispositions in students and teachers, and to the transfer and continuing use of learning. Thus mutuality of interests and complementarity of roles underly the joint responsibilities of student and teacher alike.

In graduate social work education the seminar often has been used as a device to round out the curriculum in the final semester when broad issues of knowledge, values, and practice are analyzed and integrated; this is often referred to as an "academic" seminar. Social work schools have begun to experiment with this traditional format. One new model for the seminar relates its purpose to a school's practicum whereby the teaching-learning process in the classroom and the field are evaluated on a continuous basis. These groups are often referred to as "practice" seminars. For example, at the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service a practice seminar has been developed that supplements and enhances a new social work practice course. Based on a new curriculum design that consolidates and integrates the essential methods concepts, the practice seminar strengthens the relationship between learning in the classroom and practice in the field placement.

The practice seminar is distinguished from the academic seminar by its reliance on the assessment and definition of the participants' role performance in the actual work setting. Moreover, emphasis on the reinforcement of theoretical underpinnings and development of skills distinguish it from the concept of the workshop, which emphasizes the latter.

The practice seminar serves a variety of positive functions for the social work student. It facilitates the development of peer relationships and the sharing of information and problems. Reference groups, values, and perspectives common to all students are recognized, and increases their sense of "belonging" in the joint educational endeavor. Opportunities for clarification of roles, obligations, and tasks are presented by the encouragement of horizontal and vertical communication. Finally, the practice seminar serves as a laboratory in which students and teachers can examine both the curriculum and practice demands in terms of their interrelationship, mutuality, coherence, and relevance.

THE PRACTICE SEMINAR IN ACTION

Another model of a practice seminar at Fordham was developed for a special educational program implemented by the school for employees of public service agencies under a federal research and demonstration grant known as the Certificate Program for the Public Social Services. The use of the seminar in this program over a three-year span has afforded the faculty the opportunity to study its merits in-depth. The experience with these seminar groups will serve to illustrate the operation and development of this type of course.

The certificate program consists of four theory and methods courses and a fifth course, the Seminar for Integration of Curriculum Content with Role Performance (integration seminar). Students who are full-time employees in a public agency are not deployed under professional supervision related to the program. Thus in the absence of the formal practicum, the integration seminar is deemed the essential theory-practice link. The seminar focuses on the student as both a staff person and an individual in relation to the goals and operations of the public welfare agency and to the material taught in the seminar. Of course, the integration seminar differs from the practice seminar for the full-time student who has the support of the formal practicum and is not confined to a special field of practice.

Students attend thirty weekly one-hour meetings divided into three parts. The first part is essentially exploratory. Students present a brief description and analysis of the social service functions performed at the agency. This gives the seminar leader some insight into the students' knowledge of social work and attitude toward work. Further, it provides the students with their first opportunity to learn from one another. It is assumed that initially the students will seek the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about the agency, the profession, and, ultimately, toward one another. This factor is a natural development of group process in any group setting. The leader's task is to help each member identify his role and potential contribution in order to reduce anxiety related to learning rather than social needs.

The second, and longest, part requires the student to present a problem in his practice in which he brings to bear the learning he has acquired. The focus is based on the assumption that, as an educational group, the seminar members will direct themselves toward knowledge of content, development of skills, and increased understanding. Therefore each presentation becomes, in effect, a group project in which each member makes his contribution in the effort to build a knowledge base and consider alternative behaviors and solutions. It is further assumed that at this stage the group's critical thinking will be focused maximally on ideas and minimally on emotions.

The third part is open-ended in that the students can choose general topics for discussion from the public social services. It is assumed that the reality testing in part two, which is an integral part of the group process, will lead the students in part three to ask broader questions about the services and practices with which they are identified, thus displaying new perspectives, understanding, and skills.

MANAGEMENT OF GROUP TENSION

The positive functions of the practice seminar have been noted previously in relation to socialization and formal educational processes. To further these assets, the seminar leader must identify those variables that create tensions or obstacles to group formation and joint learning.

The beginning social work student's educational experience will most likely have been with authorization groups in which the leader (the teacher) is appointed from outside the group because he is an expert in the subject. Through the use of an instructional plan and varied teaching methodologies, he leads the group to his predetermined conclusions. The seminar is ordinarily conceived of as a more open instructional process in which the leader relies on group decisions regarding the preestablished learning goals. In the seminar, the student finds his customary role in the classroom redefined due to the reduction of the authoritarian element. New and different demands are made upon him for which he may not have developed the requisite skills. Kemp has pointed out that "to change the atmosphere of an authoritarian, competitive class into that of a cooperative, interactive group, the teacher must release the miseducative tensions which classes tend to build in students."[2]

Despite the openness of exchange in the practice seminar, certain external constraints necessarily influence the student's classroom behavior. In addition to the predetermined structure of the program and the course, the student is graded. Based on the belief that the student needs to gage his progress, he is evaluated periodically according to the quantity and quality of participation, explicit use of content from the theory and methods courses, and facility in the presentation of practice problems. Although it is difficult to consistently identify competitive versus noncompetitive behavior in the seminar, the impression gained is that beyond the early stage of group formation, the impact of grading has been offset by the group's setting of mutually shared goals. The individual's efforts and skills in furthering the group's learning process are, in fact, aspects of the leader's evaluation and grading.

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[2] G. Gratton Kemp, *Small Groups and Self-Renewal* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1971).

Less easily identifiable sources of tension stem from the student's self-image as a learner and a worker. Often students have not been exposed to formal educational processes for several years, thus necessitating the difficult reorientation to the role of learner. In addition, characteristics of certain external groups with which he has had experience often serve to inhibit his participation in group deliberations. An individual's membership in overlapping groups, as Thelen has pointed out, leads to conflict and anxiety in which behaviors in one group are felt to lead to rejection in other groups.[3]

If the student has positively experienced the helping professions via conferences, institutes, workshops, and so on, he is often more open to learning in the seminar. On the other hand, if he has had, for example, unrewarding experiences with in-service training in his agency, he will often misperceive the role and function of faculty in the school. Some students develop apprehension about sharing their true feelings and ideas with group members (viewing the teacher and the others as potential informants) under the assumption that reports of unfavorable conduct and attitude might reach their superiors at the agency.

There is also a need to conform to a stereotype that they have identified as consonant with good professional social work – the treatment of the client system via the psychiatric model. Confronted with the inappropriateness of this approach in the public welfare setting, the student is forced to reorient himself. The certificate program student, then, under the simultaneous influence of two "cultures" – the school and the agency – is faced with the need to adapt his behavior to each setting.

In the analysis of the tensions experienced by the seminar group, it has become clear that the attainment of intended learning outcomes requires the sensitization of the group members to the learning and group processes in which they are engaged. It is assumed that this understanding facilitates the integration of knowledge and practice, and professional self-development. And also, that the specific knowledge pertaining to the group process becomes part of the overall understanding that is translated into practice in the agency. The initial priority, then, is to acquaint the student with these interrelated learning objectives in order to assist him to develop autonomously.

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[3] Herbert A. Thelen, *Dynamics of Groups at Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 234.

THE SEMINAR IN PROCESS

The division of the integration seminar into three parts is a formal device aimed at organizing and directing the learning process. A description of actual group process may further clarify its rationale. Numerous theorists have devised heuristic paradigms of group process. In the field of social work education, Gordon Hearn has postulated five phases:

1. Attempts to structure the unknown and to find one's position in the group.
2. Ideological conflict and polarization around issues.
3. Attempts to resolve conflicts and restore group harmony.
4. Acceptance and utilization of difference.
5. Collaborative work on corporate tasks.[4]

Hearn observed that rather than moving steadily from Phase 1 to Phase 5, groups often moved up and down the scale in a very erratic manner. Nevertheless, he believes that the categories still "hold" under observation.

Phase 1 is characterized by the student's attempt to structure an uncertain and potentially threatening situation and to find his position vis-à-vis the other group members. Because the certificate program student is a "beginner" it is unrealistic to expect him to bring order out of chaos. Here the seminar leader's quasi-authoritarian role is essential. In the development of mutual expectations, the goal and function of the seminar must be clarified and the students' cooperation enlisted. The students are frequently unfamiliar with the seminar process, and thus the purpose of Phase 1 does not become apparent until later in the seminar. Thus the students raise "means-ends" questions beyond Phase 1 – a constructive factor from the seminar leader's point of view.

In Phase 2 the beginnings of group tensions and conflicts around ideological and attitudinal differences become manifest. It is also the period in which each member's personality and capacity for growth become evident. A polarized situation often develops in which the students adopt a hostile but ambivalent stance against their agencies. In this situation the seminar leader is often alone in representing positive attitudes toward the public social services, which the students confuse with a blank endorsement of all agency practices and policies.

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[4] Gordon Hearn, "Group Methods in the Classroom – A Retrospective Analysis," mimeographed, Council on Social Work Education Meeting, Cleveland, January 21, 1971, pp. 7-9.

Recounting his experience with social work seminars, Hearn remarked that "the value system that emerged and prevailed in the group was largely the one held by the instructor as a social worker, and it, in turn, had its influence upon other aspects of the emerging group syntality."[5] However, the integration seminar leader's "value system" carries little weight in the early weeks of the program, since the students' need to ventilate their frustrations regarding their work is often dominant. The second phase is characterized by subgroups that gradually begin to form along a continuum from unmitigated hostility toward the agency to tentative understanding and acceptance of the seminar leader's frame of reference.

Phase 3 is the turning point at which a group feeling develops and there is an attempt to resolve conflicts in an effort to create harmony. Because of the wide range in age, work experience, educational backgrounds, attitudes, beliefs, learning styles, personal objectives, past group experiences, and expectations, harmony is not easily established in the integration seminar despite the near uniformity of the members' professional deployment in the agency. Further, some of the subgroups and individuals identify with the leader in an effort to resolve tensions related to (1) trying to understand what the leader wants, (2) becoming dependent upon the leader for evaluations and rewards, (3) fear of not doing what the leader wants, and (4) fear and anxiety about self-exposure.[6]

There is much shifting back and forth between Phases 1, 2, and 3 during this period because harmony is always short-lived as new materials stimulate fresh differences of opinion. The members' presentations also provide fresh opportunities for them to ventilate frustrations regarding their jobs. The seminar leader, acting in a guiding and facilitative role, must intervene whenever the group's "repetition compulsion" allows the members' expressive rather than instrumental purposes to dominate.

Observations of group process in the integration seminar indicate no real distinction between Hearn's Phases 4 and 5. The collaborative work on corporate tasks is necessarily based on the acceptance and utilization of group member differences. This stage is reached, however tenuously, by all the seminar groups near the end of the course. Of course, the continuing development of new information and concepts in the other courses stimulates the group members to rethink previously fixed positions, and the passage of time permits the gradual integration of cognitive and affective elements. In the latter part of the course most groups are sufficiently developed to select topics for discussion and modes of inquiry that realize part three of the course outline.

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[5] *Ibid.* p. 5.

[6] Kemp, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

SUMMARY

In this description of the characteristics of group life in the practice seminar, those variables that create tensions and discord or which facilitate group development and learning have been described. Experience with the integration seminar, as one model of the practice seminar, has encouraged the belief that it is an extremely useful tool for the student in his efforts to use newly acquired knowledge. Of course, it was not possible in this brief analysis to cover all the relevant factors of this complex subject, or to describe seminar experiences other than the certificate program at Fordham. For example, the factors of reference groups other than the public welfare agency that affect group members' behavior, individual learning needs, intragroup role/status relationships, and leadership behaviors were not analyzed.

Nevertheless, the main ingredients have been identified that have supported this innovation in curriculum design, and it is assumed they have some degree of universality. Perhaps the major conclusion to be drawn from the study of these groups is that the seminar leader's chief task is to reduce to a minimum the student's emotionally charged commitment to an idea or belief, in order to encourage free and independent thought.